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INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PROGRAMME

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Established in 1971, the *International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)* is a policy research institute linking environmental concerns with the developments needs of resource-poor people in the South and with other global environment and development priorities.

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THE RRA NOTES SERIES

The principal aim of this series is to share current experiences and methods among practitioners of RRA and PRA throughout the world. The Sustainable Agriculture Programme of IIED publishes these Notes containing articles on any topic related to Rapid Rural Appraisal. The name of RRA encompasses a wide range of approaches; and there are strong conceptual and methodological similarities between Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Participatory Learning Methods (PALM), Agroecosystem Analysis (AEA), Farming Systems Research, Rapid Assessment Procedures (RAP), Participatory Action Research (PAR), Rapid Rural Systems Analysis (RRSA), Méthode Accélérée de Recherche Participative (MARP) and many others.

The series is to be kept informal. This is intentional, so as to avoid the commonly encountered delays between practice and the sharing of knowledge through publication. We would thus like to hear of recent experiences and current thinking. In particular, we are seeking short and honest accounts of experiences in the field or in workshops; what worked and what did not; dilemmas and successes. They should be legible with clear drawings. Please do not worry about the style of the text. The editors will take care of this. In addition, please send details of any training manuals, papers, reports or articles which we will list.

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EDITORIAL: TRAINING FOR LEARNING

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For the occasion of the joint IIED/IDS *"Beyond Farmer First: Rural Peoples' Knowledge, Agricultural Research and Extension Practice"* workshop, held in October 1992, Robert Chambers and I wrote about the need to move towards a new learning paradigm for agriculture and rural development. This would mean a quest for both a new professionalism and new institutional settings in the search for sustainable and participatory futures (Pretty and Chambers, 1993a, b).

As many readers will agree, recent years have seen the growing strength of a new world view in agriculture. The transfer of technology approach for agricultural research and extension which has served for industrial and green revolution agriculture has been recognised to fit poorly many of the conditions and needs of complex, diverse and risk-prone agriculture. In this paradigm, research decisions are made by scientists and technology is developed on research stations and in laboratories, and then handed over to extension to pass on to farmers. In the complementary farmer-first paradigm, farmers' needs and priorities are put first, and farmers participate in research and extension. When this is done, the potential of the 'resource-poor' becomes greater than previously supposed. But to achieve true participation, putting farmers' priorities first, facilitating their analysis, and supporting their experimentation, requires changes which are personal, professional and institutional.

New Learning Approaches and Environments

The central concept of the new paradigm is that it enshrines new ways of learning about the world. Teaching and learning, though, are not the same thing. Teaching is the normal mode in curricula; it underpins the transfer of technology model of research; and it is central to many organisational structures (Ison, 1990; Bawden, 1994). Universities and other agricultural institutions reinforce the teaching paradigm by giving the impression that they are custodians of knowledge which can be dispensed or given (usually by lecture) to a recipient (a student). But teaching can impede learning. Professionals who are to work with local complexity and diversity need to engage in sensitive learning about the particular conditions of rapid change. Where teaching does not include a focus on self-development and enhancing the ability to learn, *"teaching threatens sustainable agriculture"* (Ison, 1990).

There is little experience of institutional reform that has put learning approaches at the core of education. A move from a teaching to a learning style has profound implications. The focus is then less on what we learn, and more on how we learn. Institutions will need to provide creative learning environments, conditions in which learning can take place through experience, through open and equal interactions, and through personal exploration and experimentation. The pedagogic goals become self-strengthening for people and groups through self-learning and self-teaching. Russell and Ison (1991) indicated that in this new mode of research and development *"the role and action of the researcher is very much a part of the interactions being studied"*.

New Institutional Settings

Many current agricultural institutions, whether universities, research organisations, or extension agencies are characterised by restrictive bureaucracy. They have centralised hierarchical authority, specialised disciplinary departments, standardised procedures, and uniform packaged outputs. Personal promotion and institutional survival depend less on external achievement, such as farmers adopting the products of research, and more on internal criteria, such as performance according to professional norms and public relations with funding sources. Such institutions are stable partly through self-deception. They are sustained by modes of learning which present misleading feedback from the peripheries, giving falsely favourable impressions of the impact of their packages and programmes.

Institutions that respond better to open learning environments and participatory methods must be decentralised, with an open multidisciplinarity, flexible teams, and outputs responding to the demands of farmers. In these conditions, personal promotion and institutional survival should depend more on external achievement, such as responding to farmers' diverse expressed needs. The new institutions will be learning organisations, with realistic and rapid feedback flows for adaptive responses to change. Multiple realities will be understood through multiple linkages and alliances, with continuous dialogue between different actors.

Old and New Professionalism

The new roles of farmers, the new participatory approaches and methods, and the new learning environments, all imply new roles for agricultural scientists and extensionists. Scientists must continue their normal science, in laboratories and on research stations. But in addition, they will have to learn from and with farmers if they are to serve diverse and complex conditions and farming systems. The new roles for outsider professionals include convenor for groups; catalyst and consultant to stimulate, support and advise; facilitator of farmers' own analysis; searcher and supplier for materials and practices for farmers to try; and tour operator to enable farmers to learn from one another (Chambers, 1992; 1993). These new roles require a new professionalism with new concepts, values, methods and behaviour.

Although to characterise an old and a new professionalism is to risk polarised caricature between the bad and the good, the contrasts are clear. Typically, old professionals are single-disciplinary, work largely or only on research stations, are insensitive to diversity of context, and are concerned with generating and transferring technologies. The new professionals, by contrast, are either multidisciplinary or work closely with other disciplines, are not intimidated by the complexities of close dialogue with farmers and rural people, and are continually aware of the context of inquiry and development.

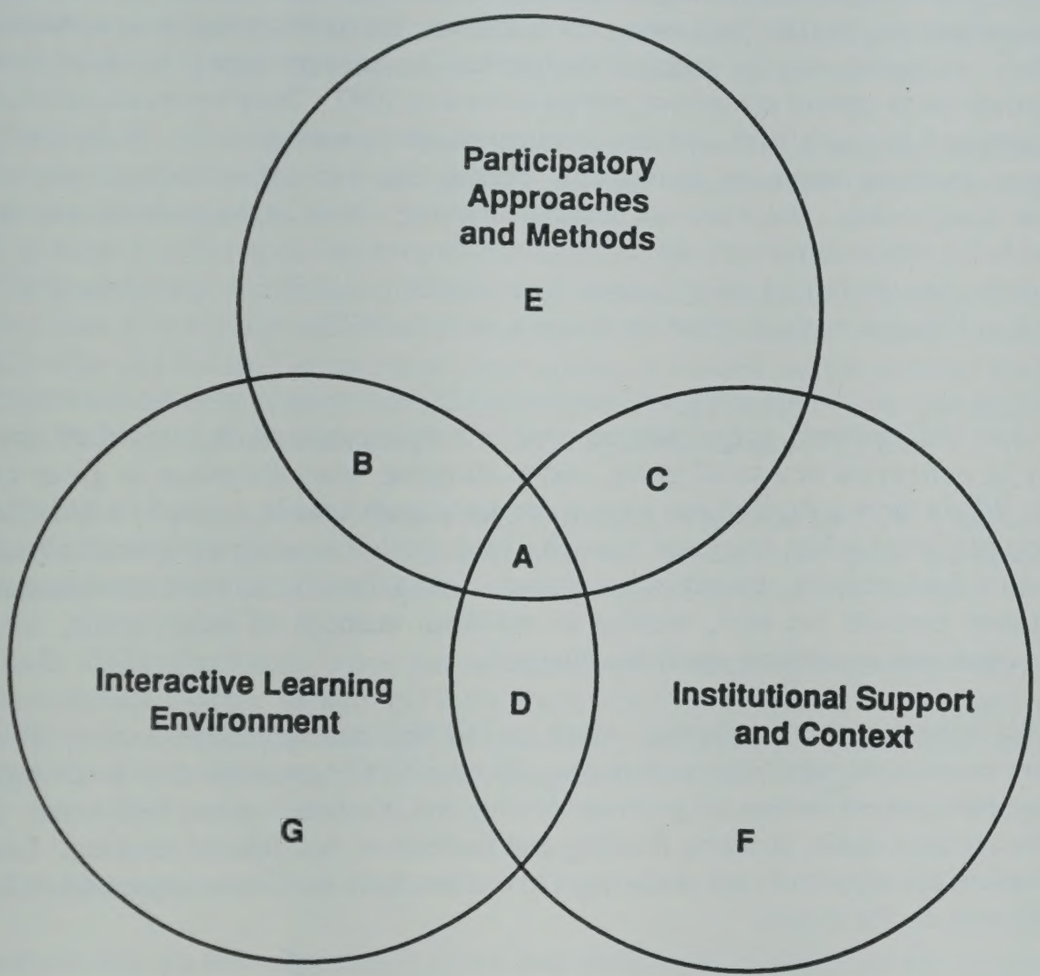
Three Factors for Success

This vision for the future, in which the new professionalism becomes the norm in new institutional structures and partnerships, has already been achieved in certain places. There are, for example, an increasing number of environmental and economic successes in complex, diverse and risk-prone areas, where agricultural and economic regeneration has occurred. Local groups supported by new professionals working in enabling institutions have increased yields, reduced environmental impacts, built capacities and resilience, and reduced dependencies. For this vision, evidence suggests there are three essential areas to tackle. These are new methodologies for partnerships, dialogue,

participatory analysis and sharing; new learning environments for professionals and rural people to develop capacities; and new institutional environments, including improved linkages within and between institutions.

These three areas for action are shown in Figure 1 as intersecting circles (Pretty and Chambers, 1993a, b). The most sustainable solutions lie in the overlapping central sector.

Figure 1. **Conceptual Framework for a New Learning Paradigm** (from Pretty and Chambers, 1993a, b)



The following assumptions underlie this conceptual framework:

- participatory approaches and methods support local innovation and adaptation, accommodate and augment diversity and complexity, enhance local capabilities, and so are more likely to generate sustainable processes and practices, represented by the ECAB circle;

- an interactive learning environment encourages participatory attitudes, excites interest and commitment, and so contributes to jointly negotiated courses of action, represented by the GBAD circle;

- institutional support encourages the spread between and within institutions of participatory methods, and so gives innovators the freedom to act and share. This is represented by the FDAC circle, which includes where a whole organisation shifts towards participatory methods and management, and where there are informal and formal linkages between different organisations.

In this perspective, sectors G, F and E represent starting points and preconditions, but none is likely to spread well unless it receives support by moving into D, C or B, and then into A.

Thus, participatory methods, as in E, are likely to be abandoned unless there is institutional support or a learning environment. This has been a recurrent experience with field training workshops in PRA. Those who have taken part may be convinced, and wish to introduce participatory methods into their organisations, but find they cannot do this alone. Partly they may lack confidence or clout, but also their colleagues may be sceptical or hostile. I remember being involved in a series of training courses on an upland agriculture project in Asia in 1987. They were successful at the time. Everyone appeared to enjoy them, and the course evaluations were positive. Some five years later I heard more feedback about the institution. Participants had indeed enjoyed the course, and remembered many details. But it had not changed anything. None of the methods were being used. No changes in the relationships between scientists and farmers had occurred as a result of the course. A critical factor was the lack of direct support from within the institution, particularly from the top, and the lack of linkages made to other local actors, such as NGOs.

Sector G on its own, a creative and participatory learning environment without institutional support or participatory field methods, is typically marginal, vulnerable, and short-lived. Such environments tend to rely on one person or a small group, and to disappear when the person or group moves or is moved out. Where there is institutional support for participatory modes, as in F, it is liable to remain only rhetoric and intent unless expressed through a participatory learning environment and/or the use of participatory field methods. Examples are known where a director has been convinced of the value of participatory methods but staff, wedded to top-down methods of investigation, have resisted reform. In consequence, nothing much has changed.

In sector A, support within institutions exists at the top, and authority is more decentralised. Linkages are encouraged with other institutions, whether NGO, government or local organisations. The learning environment focuses on problem-solving, and is interactive and field-based. Behaviour and attitudes are democratic, stressing listening and facilitation, not didactic teaching. Local groups and organisations are supported, and encouraged to conduct their own experiments and extension, and to make demands on the system.

Examples of these conditions, or conditions close to them, can now be found in a growing number of countries and contexts. The papers in this issue of *RRA Notes* are seeking to explore how we can better understand the process of moving towards sector A in the Figure. Many issues are identified in the 26 papers that are important for trainers and facilitators of learning.

Location of the Training

One important theme emerging from many of the papers is the effect the location of the training workshop can have on the success of the training. Several papers describe the potentialities and pitfalls which the trainer should be aware of when conducting training in the following locations:

- *Universities.* Andy Inglis and Janice Jiggins highlight many of the problems encountered when carrying out training *in situ* in a university. These include a feeling of mistrust of

academia that participants from outside the university bring in with them; the insecurities fostered by academic life brought in by under- and post-graduate participants; and the danger that in a university context, PRA can become pigeonholed as just another research methodology.

Mick Howes illustrates the potentials of holding training *in situ* in a university. He explains how a university can itself become the subject of PRA training exercises, enabling participants rapidly to become familiar with its functions and history, and eliminating the academic 'ivory tower' issue which can be intimidating.

Rapport building, especially when the university is already involved in projects in the community, enables links to be developed for easy fieldwork for participants. This has occurred in India, the UK and the USA (Narayanasamy, Mukherjee, and Howard). This enabled these links to be permanently forged for use in future exercises.

- *Participants' Place of work.* Kenneth Odero carried out a training exercise for NGO employees at their place of work, and warns of the disadvantages of this location in terms of constant interruptions.

- *Northern Setting.* Although still not a very widespread practice, a number of the papers in this issue have highlighted how PRA training in the North can have certain advantages. Uwe Kievelitz and Reiner Forster report on a training in Austria, which included fieldwork in an Alpine valley. They found the fact that the participants could conduct the exercises in their own language a distinct advantage in a short course constrained by time.

  Mick Howes used a farm in Sussex for participants to practise their PRA methods. Being a small, family-run enterprise, the farm was not too different from the kinds of family operations which course participants would encounter in their own countries.

  Neela Mukherjee found, when she conducted a PRA training course for health workers in Birmingham, that her background in the South was of great interest to the course participants, and provided many opportunities for exchanging experiences. It was a refreshing surprise for them to find a Southern trainer teaching in a Northern setting.

Choice of Participants

Several authors indicate how important it is to select participants carefully for any course or training activity. A major constraint to spread is the number of trainers available - the current demand far exceeds supply. So, one strategy must be to seek better ways of developing individuals as trainers. This is not generally a quick process. The careful and strategic use of trainers for training opportunities therefore matters.

Key factors include selecting participants for field workshops who are likely to be able to spread the participatory approaches and methods, and themselves become trainers later; inviting at least two from the same organisation so that they can provide mutual support on their return; ensuring that sharing and critical self-awareness are built into participatory approaches from the start; and support and dissemination through producing and sending materials to targeted individuals. These materials can include slide packs, reports on applications of methods and on innovations; local networking; and notes on 'how-to-do-it' for methods of learning, rather than manuals and cookbooks which are liable to inhibit self-learning.

Fieldwork

One aspect on which most writers agree, is the importance of including fieldwork in the training. The papers presented here illustrate the range and inventiveness of ways in which trainers have encouraged participants to use the methods in real-life settings. These range from hiking to remote Indonesian villages to spend three weeks conducting PRA (Bill Duggan), to sending participants to spend time helping the residents of small Ohio towns sweep their streets (Stephen Howard and Tracy Mygrant).

N. Narayanasamy clearly shows in his paper the learning value to be obtained from using PRA methods in the field. Following fieldwork conducted in a village in Tamil Nadu, participants commented on issues which had emerged from the exercise - such as the tendency for outsiders to dominate the proceedings, for members of lower castes to remain unheard, of the dangers of raising expectations and on the use of maps to focus on particular issues, especially in larger communities. These are issues which are of vital importance, yet which often only become apparent when dealing with a community directly.

PRA Training versus RRA Training: PRA as Action Research

Kievelitz and Forster point out that most training workshops are still more RRA than PRA-oriented, ie., they teach ways of collecting information by an "*outside 'expert' group rather than stimulating self-analysis within a local group*". They go on to say that if the training is to be more PRA-oriented, it is likely to turn into 'action research', and then one is faced with the ethical issue of how far a follow-up of this initiated process can be guaranteed. Their advice is to collaborate through an intermediary organisation who are willing and able to continue the process, once initiated by the training programme. James Mascarenhas also discusses this issue. He notes that since PRA is such a powerful approach, it is bound to generate information on needs and expectations, but the tendency for most organisations is to then back away.

Kavita Srivastava, commenting from the point of view of a new PRA participant, makes the same point. She felt that the workshop she participated in failed to emphasise that PRA is an activist, ongoing process and not just the individual, one-off activity of a researcher.

Mark Lammerink describes a course in Nicaragua which specifically trains development workers to conduct action research. Part of the training programme included participatory action research in a fishing village on the Pacific Coast of Nicaragua. By the third meeting villagers had been spurred into action - forming fishing cooperatives and raising money for a new road.

> *"Prominent features of this project were its emphasis on the participation of villagers in their own development, and its active presence in the village not as benefactor, but as catalyst and partner in development. This was because the methods used did not merely diagnose and appraise, but went further by sharing analysis and understanding of the local situation. This in turn lead to development activities that were creative, productive and sustainable."*

John Thompson's contribution shows that it is possible for large, bureaucratic, public agencies to make the PRA approach become reality instead of remaining mere rhetoric. Examples from Kenya and Lesotho of successful transformations by the Ministries of Agriculture illustrate the role which training has to play in this process. Senior officers who had been trained in PRA brought a vision of a more people-oriented approach, and were instrumental in training other officers within the

department. However, he cautions that for these kinds of transformations to occur, a supportive atmosphere must be created which includes strong leadership for and commitment to the particpatory approach, a long-term and flexible financial involvement on the part of donors, room for experimentation and an integrated field-based training programme.

After the Training

Several papers describe their findings when following-up PRA training. One in particular describes the use of PRA techniques to follow-up and assess PRA training. Marcy Vigoda has written about how village women in Bangladesh, trained as community health workers, used PRA methods to assess their own performance. Using local natural materials, the women made maps to show in which houses they had given health advice, promoted the installation of latrines, taught about nutrition and so on. The exercise emphasised for the women themselves the impact their work was having on the community.

Another important aspect of follow-up work is to assess the extent to which PRA networks develop following in-country training. Parmesh Shah evaluated post-PRA experiences in Ethiopia and Uganda, and emphasises the importance of including the development of post-training action plans in the training workshop. These action plans are vital for ensuring that the PRA approach is incorporated into the workings of both national government and NGOs, and that the infrastructure is in place to disseminate PRA methods and developments locally, nationally and regionally.

Manu Kulkarni expresses concern that PRA will have little effect if it is not made more "state friendly", more accessible to government use. He describes how PRA could help Indian government programmes to target resources to the truly poorest members of a community.

Critical, though, is the realisation that PRA methods do not stand alone. The methods will not provoke change. Local institutions need to be promoted and helped to develop into viable organisations, and professionals themselves must appreciate a little more the importance of their own actions. As James Mascarenhas asks "*how do we use PRA as an instrument to bring about greater change?*"

New Contexts for PRA

Section E of this issue details the growing variety of ways and situations in which PRA can be applied: for participatory monitoring and evaluation (Suzanne Quinney); in the highly dynamic and variable context of a floodplain community (David Thomas); to enable village volunteers to become village analysts, managers and agents of institutional change (Parmesh Shah and Meera Kaul Shah); for combining training in theology with training in rural development (Thomas Kroeck) and for analysing agricultural policy (Gerry Gill).

PRA Trainers: Still Learning

A number of papers, written by experienced PRA trainers, emphasise that for trainers too, there is always something new to learn. In particular, Irene Guijt highlights how PRA training (and PRA methods generally) are not gender-sensitive enough, and describes a training workshop in Brazil which encouraged participants to develop a gender-sensitive understanding of the rural community.

Alice Welbourn, Robert Chambers, Neela Mukherjee and Sarah Holden enrich their papers with a wealth of fun and stimulating ideas, including detailed descriptions on how best to use new methods for training for learning. In particular, Robert Chambers draws on the experience of many trainers in two pieces that describe 21 ways of forming groups and 21 tips for short workshops containing lots of people.

Acknowledgment

I am very grateful to Fiona Hinchcliffe for her valuable help in preparing and editing this issue of RRA Notes.

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1. PRA TRAINING IN UNIVERSITIES: SOME THOUGHTS PROMPTED BY A RECENT WORKSHOP IN CANADA

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The workshop was run on a fee-paying basis every day for ten days, with 13 participants (eight women) and two facilitators. Six of the participants were full or part-time students (undergraduates and graduates) from university schools of Rural Planning and Development, Rural Extension Studies, or Landscape Architecture. The remainder were in professional work related to rural or urban development in Canada or overseas. One of us had previously conducted PRA training in the field and in development agencies, and the other mainly in academic institutions in the Netherlands and Canada (but not in a course which brought together students and non-students).

Although the workshop was judged by us and the participants to be a success, some issues and problems arose that gave us food for thought. We have put this note together mainly as an *aide memoire* to help sort out our thoughts in the cold light of day, but also to start to thinking about possible strategies to deal with the problems and issues. It may also be useful for other PRA trainers who find themselves facilitating workshops in academic institutions.

The argument is often heard that universities must find a place for PRA training, "before it's too late" (ie. before people become cynical professionals/career-oriented technocrats etc.). Sounds fine in theory, but in practice there are obstacles which are peculiar to unversities which do not make it easy or for that matter desirable. In our experience, there are a whole range of things that need more thought and preparation. These include issues relating to:

- participants' identity;
- participant maturity in relation to diversity of goals;
- emotional baggage;
- the lack of university staff as workshop participants;
- logistics; and
- placements.

Participants' Identity

Though the student participants were all adults in their early twenties upwards and mostly already had experienced professional and adult domestic roles, they were treated in the university as juniors, to be directed and guided intellectually, with low status in the academic hierarchy. This had given rise to all sorts of frustrations, resentments and unresolved power questions. The students brought into the workshop the loss of confidence and insecurity that academic life had created in them. The undergraduates and post-graduates also were conscious of fine distinctions in academic status among

themselves. The working professionals for their part brought a mistrust of the 'undisciplined' and 'intellectual' nature of academia and time pressures from their work commitments.

PRA gave everyone a chance to re-integrate and re-establish themselves as responsible and confident persons. But less painful and more explicit learning exercises for this would be useful additions to the PRA tool-kit. Would more rigorous self-selection be possible through more information being given on the process before people sign up? However this might put off those most ready to learn and/or who could derive most benefit. An additional strategy would be for the facilitators to be more explicit about these tensions when the workshop contract was being formulated.

Participant Maturity in Relation to Diversity of Goals

PRA would seem to require a certain level of personal maturity, and a critical mass of 'real world' experience in trying to change the status quo, for the concepts and principles to make any real sense to participants. If their only work experience has been in institutions (such as schools, universities or research stations), they may lack the empathy to understand what PRA is trying to achieve, why, and where personal 'reversals' fit in. Or, as in the case under review, some may treat the workshop as just another piece of the curriculum with no 'real world' implications. Related to this concern is the narrow view held by some participants that PRA is a research methodology which can be adapted to satisfy academic thesis requirements.

On the positive side, those whose primary concern is research tend to be young, enthusiastic, full of energy, less cynical than 'done it all, seen it all' participants who are inclined to propose an endless series of reasons why PRA 'cannot work'. The ones who engage most readily are young professionals with experience of the limitations of other approaches but still with the energy and commitment to doing something about it.

The mix of starting orientations and personal goals is quite different to the field-based or the profession-based training situation in which participants, whatever their idiosyncratic objectives, tend to be united by the need to address a specific problem or issue and/or a shared context or goal. Without an immediate goal, context and task in front of them, the additional distractions and stresses arising from the timing of the workshop at the end of the academic year, the need to submit research proposals, fulfil domestic, family and work-related duties, and worries about housing, finances and health added noticeably to the difficulties in maintaining focus and cohesion.

Emotional Baggage

People seem particularly prone to carry into any course with "participation" in the title a heap of emotional baggage which they appear to expect to be able to examine or to dump. Students seem especially prone to the indulgence of unburdening themselves. PRA does (and indeed should?) stimulate self-reflection and heightened awareness of behaviour and process. But it should also instil a certain discipline in behaviour and rigour in application.

Where (as in this case) a number of participants already knew each other and had developed inter-departmental and personal rivalries, cliques and friendships, the specifically PRA dynamic was hard to get going against this already partly established emotional backdrop. We might have done better to stress the items in the contract which emphasised the need to keep the workshop proceedings off-the-record and confidential to the participants.

Paradoxically, despite all the self analysis, there was a general reluctance among the participants to relate the exercises and the reflections on the process to their own performance or to feed the learning back into the group dynamic. There was a marked tendency to intellectualise the learning, to push the analysis away from any personal application, and to deal with the abstract rather than the concrete or the 'here-and-now'.

Lack of University Staff as Workshop Participants

Faculty staff, though invited, did not sign up. This has also been the experience in the four other PRA-type university trainings facilitated by one of us. Fear of loss of dignity and authority in the presence of students seems to be a reason. Problems with getting time off from other academic commitments, as well as week-ending or domestic priorities, also seem to play a role. Pre-workshop consultation and adjusting the scheduling to two-three weeks of half day sessions could overcome staff reluctance and allow them to keep up with their administrative and teaching duties. Half days would also respond to participants' complaints at the intensity of full days, with too little time for reading and digesting.

Logistics

The logistics on campus offer some advantages and disadvantages. Mobilisation of resources such as video, felt pens, paper etc. is relatively easy and good workspace is available. Food and bars are at hand, cheap and friendly. On the other hand, there are many distractions, as telephones and faxes allow non-students to address work-related queries from their colleagues, and students can cut workshop time to hand in essays, attend tutorials etc. An off-campus venue might be preferable.

Placements

Real-life placements in the field are a must, but they have to be carefully chosen, for two main reasons. Not all contexts and problems lend themselves to PRA; PRA is not a universal panacea. It is, for example, not particularly well-suited to handling the social work problems of the emotionally disturbed. Secondly, in a short workshop, participants are only in the community for a number of hours, typically with no likelihood of follow-up in a continuing relationship. Another consideration is the location of the interaction: it is off-putting to invite non-academics for meetings on campus. The 'university' is an alien and somewhat awe-inspiring institution for non-academics.

Final Reflections

These problems and issues are likely to be intensified in conservative academic institutions which do not have interfaculty or interdisciplinary courses or a record of accommodating or encouraging experiential learning. Many, perhaps most, agricultural universities tend to be conservative. The past several years of political conservatism and financial retrenchment seem to have reinforced innate conservatism in teaching methods and a retreat behind disciplinary boundaries.

Mind you, we hear you say, surely it won't be these universities that ask for PRA training? Don't be so sure: a bit of fashionable window-dressing might be all they think they need to preserve their budgets and claim pre-eminence.

2. RRA TRAINING IN A UK-BASED RURAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE

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For a number of years, we have been using IIED's Rahimabad simulation and Robert Chambers' presentations to teach RRA on our three month course on "*Rural Research and Rural Policy*" at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS). The popularity of these components, which will already be familiar to many readers, encouraged us to add two new exercises to the most recent course:

- a Rapid Rural Appraisal of IDS; and
- a farm study, using RRA methods.

The course is residential and intensive. There are approximately six hours of contact time each day, five days a week. We attract upwards of 20 study fellows, drawn predominantly from Third World countries, and from a range of government, academic and NGO backgrounds. The majority are men, although the proportion of women has tended to increase through the years. Many are leaving their own countries for the first time and have relatively little idea what to expect when they arrive.

The Rapid Rural Appraisal of IDS

The first of the two exercises, which involved an investigation of the IDS itself, used RRA to help people find their feet. Gaining some familiarity with the techniques was treated as of secondary importance. It required half a day during the introductory week. I ran it mainly by myself, with some help from a course assistant, acting as a 'village guide', and from various members of IDS staff, who made themselves available for short periods in different capacities.

Following a brief introduction to the techniques to be used, participants were divided into five groups, and each set a single task:

- One group were taken on a transect of the building, which allowed them to identify and locate facilities, and to stop and have short conversations with a range of different Institute members. With the transect complete, they were then able to prepare a map which identified the broad types of work being carried out within the Institute, and the places where different programmes had their offices.

- Another group consulted a series of annual reports running back to the founding of IDS in 1966 to build a historical time line and convey a preliminary sense of how the Institute's work had evolved.

- Two other groups looked in more detail at recent documents dealing respectively with the IDS's research and its programme of operational activities, before constructing charts showing what the fellowship had been working on in various geographical regions. (This, among other things, led to the embarrassing discovery that we were currently doing nothing for Nigeria - a country from which four of our participants were drawn).

- The final group used a combination of annual reports and myself, as a key informant, to draw a Venn diagram identifying the different groups within the Institute and the relationship between them.

Some of the tasks inevitably took rather longer to complete than others, but this problem was overcome by re-assigning those who finished early to help others who needed more time. The morning culminated in a 'village meeting' where the charts and diagrams which had been produced were presented in the plenary, Robert Chambers playing an old and knowledgeable community member. Feedback was also provided by Ros Eyben, who happened to be visiting from the ODA, and who slipped naturally into the role of local bank manager, taking us to task for saying nothing about how the 'village' was financed.

Certain parts of the RRA worked better than others, but each of the individual exercises produced at least some useful insights. Taken as a whole, the morning helped people to establish themselves at the IDS more rapidly than would otherwise have been the case; making them aware of what was going on, and enabling them subsequently to approach members of staff working on subjects of mutual interest. At the same time we were able to lay foundations for the small group work which was to feature prominently throughout the course, as well as providing a preliminary grounding in RRA itself. Other possibilities which might have been exploited could have included seasonal calendars (perhaps to explain why Fellows never seem to be there when students need them most); and an extension of scope to take in other parts of the campus, or possibly even certain aspects of life in the town.

With minor modifications, there is little reason why what we did should not work just as well anywhere else.

The Farm Study

A short time after the course had begun, some of the participants approached me to see if a visit to a farm could be arranged. This had been a feature of previous courses, when it had been used as an opportunity to explore farming systems research methods. On this occasion, encouraged by the earlier experience, it was decided to attempt an RRA instead.

Personal contacts were used to set things up with a farm a short distance from the University. This was a small enterprise struggling to survive by combining sheep and poultry rearing with a second hand timber business, an egg delivery round, and the provision of services such as fencing and ploughing to other farms. In some ways, it was therefore not too dissimilar from the kinds of family operations which course participants would encounter in their own countries. The key difference was that the farmer virtually ran everything by himself, only calling in additional help from time to time. With livestock interviewing techniques still in their infancy, this posed the problem of finding sufficient informants for 20 study fellows to work with. The solution was to recruit the farmer and his main part-time worker, and to split into two parties of ten, which then visited the farm on two different days. Both, in turn, were then sub-divided into two groups, each of which worked for half a day with one informant, before switching around in the middle.

A brief orientation of the methods to be used was given on the days before the visits, but most learning took place as we proceeded. Most of the individual exercises were conducted almost exactly as they would be in a Third World village. They included:

- a transect across the farm to explore the relationship between elevation, soil type, land use, problems and possible actions;
- a participatory mapping exercise, which yielded unexpected revelations about the history of the farm and of land use in the surrounding area;
- matrix ranking of the fields beyond his own farm that the farmer was able to use, leading on to the preparation of maps and seasonal calendars;
- a map of the external fields, which then triggered discussions about the seasonal movements of sheep and the circumstances of the owners which led to their land being available in the first place;
- the preparation of a seasonal calendar, relating work load to the life-cycle of livestock and indicating disease patterns;
- matrix ranking of the different income generating activities undertaken on the farm;
- production flow charts for sheep rearing;
- the preparation of a time line dealing with all of the major developments taking place in the operation of the farm over the last 30 years; from this trend diagrams were generated, showing how income from different sources had fluctuated, and how the portfolio of activities had been periodically re-shuffled in response.

Unfortunately, since this was an unscheduled activity, which had to be fitted into weekends, there was no time to tidy up charts and put them together for a village meeting. This would clearly have added a further element of realism and provided further opportunities to build skills, and on another occasion I would certainly have tried to find time for it. It would also be good to explore other techniques such as daily time use charts, and to try to involve the farmer's wife, in order to get a woman's perspective on what was going on.

We were perhaps fortunate to have such a suitable farm available in reasonable proximity to the University, but similar opportunities probably exist in most areas if a little time is taken to seek them out. Our experience suggests that, just like villagers in the Third World, farmers enjoy taking part in an RRA, although we felt it was appropriate to offer a fee, which bore some relation to the time expended. Taking this into account, and including buffet lunches and the hire of mini-buses for the two days (but excluding the cost of my own time), the total cost amounted to approximately £360, or £18 per participant per day.

3. PRA EXERCISE IN AN INDIAN VILLAGE: A RETROSPECTIVE EVALUATION OF THE FIRST EXPOSURE TO THE PROCESS

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Introduction

Gandhigram Rural Institute (GRI) was established in 1956. Right from its inception it has been trying to promote casteless and classless society through extension and research. The Institute recognises the primacy of people in rural development and has always put people first. Its extension villages are mostly in remote areas. The participants have been, by and large, the weak, the powerless and the poor. People are always consulted; they analyse their own problems in a village gathering; fix their own priorities and offer their own solutions. This approach has brought local people and faculty members closer.

GRI has experimented with several people-oriented approaches such as quadrangular models, women melas, University at the Village Doorsteps and so on. In the early 1990s, Participatory Rural Appraisal was included in GRI's repertoire.

Recently GRI organised its first PRA workshop in the field[1]. The objectives were as follows:

- To give villagers the opportunity to analyse their own problems, and through debate and discussion, to indicate possible solutions.
- To enable the staff and students to learn about several approaches and methods of PRA through participatory learning.
- To help the PRA team understand the socio-economic conditions of the people, their perceived needs, problems, priorities and so on.

The Village

The village selected for the PRA workshop was Pillaiarnatham - situated seven kilometres on the north-western side of Gandhigram. The village has 327 households with a population of 1650. The Institute has been working with the people of the village through *Krishi Vigyan Kendra* (Farm Research Centre) and *Mather Sangh* (Women's Association). The Women's Association is running the University canteen. The University has supported the cause of downtrodden women in the village by giving training in various trades to increase their employment opportunities. There was therefore already good rapport between the villagers, particularly the women, and the University.

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[1]Reports on later village PRA exercises are available from the author at Gandhigram Rural Institute (see also Endnotes for a review).

PRA Participants

The PRA team was a well-composed multi-disciplinary team. There were staff members from the Departments of Agriculture, Extension, Rural Economics, Home Science, Rural Industries and Management, Rural Health and Sanitation, Rural Sociology, Youth Affairs and Gandhian Thought. There were also field organisers and assistants in rural development, pre-school education and from the Farm Research Centre. There were students and trainees from Area Development and Rural Development. It was a perfect blend of staff and students from different departments and faculties. In total, there were 25 people in the PRA team. In addition, the Vice-Chancellor of the Institute spent almost the full two days with the participants.

From the village, 60 women members of the *Mather Sangham* (Women's Association) participated. Five men from the village also joined in.

The First Day

The day started with a prayer followed by a lecture/discussion session on the genesis of PRA, methods and approaches of PRA, PRA in relation to other methods and so on. It was meant as an exposure session for those who have no previous knowledge of PRA and its methods.

Next the group was divided into three sub-groups.

- Sub-group 1 chose the task of tracing the history of the village and identifying the major events that had taken place in the past, such as:

  - how the village got its name;
  - the year the school opened;
  - the year the first election was held;
  - when the village was electrified;
  - advent of hospital, bank and communication facilities;
  - first use of chemical fertilisers.

Child rearing practices, widow remarriage, intercaste marriage, family planning methods and crop cultivation were also discussed. The exercise went on for four hours. Village women actively participated in the discussion and recorded the events chronologically.

- Sub-group 2 analysed the trends of change in the village over a period of 30 years. This included population, family size, wages for men and women, literacy, caste, animal population, alcoholism, dowry, education of female children, medical facilities, housing, prices, use of fertilisers, improved seeds, irrigation and so on.

- Sub-group 3 did a seasonality exercise. This covered important aspects such as rainy days, total rain, crops, agricultural labour, income, expenditure, debt, migration, festivals, food availability, illness etc.

The time spent on each exercise was between four and five hours. The participants from the village sat throughout the exercise and their participation was full and complete. PRA team members from the Institute were fully engrossed in the exercise and some of them even skipped lunch. Afterwards, all three sub-groups met and shared the information. This was followed by a lively discussion where

the women articulated several of their problems - dominant problems being drinking water distribution systems and housing among the *harijans*.

Reporting and discussion went on for about three hours. In the evening at around 6pm, the PRA team from the Institute met separately to discuss how the process went. Of particular importance were whether there had been any problems in gathering and sharing information and whether villagers participated freely without domination from outsiders. The observations made by the PRA team on the problems were as follows:

- Sometimes questions were asked incoherently, or before the previous ones were fully answered. Thus questions were rushed and PRA members jumped from one aspect to another, making recording difficult.

- The village group consisted mainly of women. Problems related to men could not be gathered.

- Absence of old people, especially in the group which did trend change, led to the paucity of historical information.

- The village group was largely represented by the *Harijan*, so the problems discussed turned out to be the problems of the *Harijans*.

- Information about the PRA schedule having been channelled through the higher strata, it could have contributed to certain forces of selectivity in the choice of participants.

- Village women attended the meeting with high expectations.

- In certain cases high-caste women tried to dominate the low-caste women in the discussion. Lower caste groups still had many problems which remained unexpressed at the end of the exercise.

The team then discussed which methods to choose to probe the problems of the people further. It was decided to go in for village modelling to understand the structure of the village in general, and to analyse the problem of drinking water distribution. It was also decided to map the village, especially the *harijan* colony, to understand the housing problem.

The Second Day

In the early morning of the second day the PRA team went around the village in small groups to learn about the village structure. After this the team, along with the village women, gathered to discuss their plans for the day. Two groups were formed.

Village Modelling

The first group did the modelling of the village. The water distribution problem was depicted in the model. It was found that the *Harijan* did not have even a single water tap in their colony (40 households), whereas each non-*Harijan* street with 25 to 30 houses had two or three taps. The *Harijan* have to walk a distance of about 500 yards to fetch water, but they are not always permitted even to do this.

The group discussed this problem thoroughly and the PRA team members mainly became passive spectators. There were arguments and counter arguments; the women discussed alternatives and finally agreed that water connection should be given to the *Harijan* colony. The expenditure involved was also discussed. The *Harijans* agreed to share part of the expenditure. The Institute also promised to bear part of the expense. A problem which had remained for long was discussed and settled within four hours through this technique. The Women's Association and extension department of GRI have taken on the follow-up work.

Village Mapping

The second group did the mapping of the village. They decided to only map the *Harijan* Colony for two reasons:

1. to focus the problem of housing; and

2. the size of the village and the shortage of time made it impossible to draw a map of the whole village.

The group included a woman surveyor from within the village. They sat in a common place chosen by the villagers and started drawing the map. As they started sketching they found it difficult to locate the houses, so they decided to go to the *Harijan* Colony, where they saw each house and drew the map. This enabled the group to see the appalling housing conditions for themselves: space was very limited, there were houses within houses. For instance there was a house with a plinth area of six square metres. Within that house three families lived. 43 families lived in an area of 200m^2. Most of the dwelling places were huts with thatched roofs. A day's fodder for a pair of bullocks formed the roof for many houses. There were hardly any streets and practically no drainage system.

Follow Up and Evaluation

Maps and models were explained in a common gathering by the village women. Information and data arising out of the model and map were discussed in detail; queries were raised, explanations were offered, additional information was provided, problems were defined, alternatives were spelt out and discussed, the best alternative was chosen. For all these discussions, the PRA team served only as a catalyst.

Immediately after this exercise the members of the PRA team discussed the entire process in a separate session. They felt that it had gone well. Villagers had done the modelling and mapping without interference and domination by any PRA member. The team had merely acted as a facilitator.

Following this, the PRA team members were asked to evaluate the workshop. Some of the observations made on the PRA technique were that it:

- is a revolutionary method;
- helps gather information quickly;
- is interesting;
- is easily understood and followed by villagers with no orientation whatsoever because they don't have to anything other than act naturally;
- is thus a good way to identify the hidden talents of the villagers.

On the mechanism of the training course, they commented that:

- a smaller village would have perhaps yielded better results;
- each member of PRA team should go round the village before he/she does anything in the village;
- two days are not enough;
- members of the team should stay in the houses of villagers and not in a separate place.

Apart from the workshop, the departments of Rural Industries and Management organised a demonstration/exhibition on income generation projects in order to show to the villagers the availability of a wide range of income-generating opportunities. Later in the evening the Cultural Cell of GRI presented a programme covering various educational themes relevant to dowry system, female infanticide, alcoholism, illiteracy, castism and so on. The next day the village women came up with an excellent cultural programme themselves.

Conclusions

On the whole every member of the team seemed to have enjoyed the time they spent in the village. Each member felt that villagers' problems could be analysed in a relaxed way and that solutions could be found immediately. They felt that PRA developed close rapport between the villagers and the PRA team, and any distance between them was quickly bridged.

Villagers gained self-confidence by taking part in PRA exercises. Women who did not speak at all during the first day, started contributing on the second day. They understood and analysed the problems systematically. They argued, quarrelled, shouted amongst themselves, but finally agreed upon needs, priorities and solutions. This prevents solutions from being imposed from above.

Last but not least, the 'learned' teacher learned a lot from the so-called 'less informed' rural folk.

4. RRA TRAINING IN A US MASTERS PROGRAMME: THE DIRECTOR'S VIEW

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We have recently been trying to respond to the requests of our students in Masters level programmes to offer more practical skills or applied social science techniques as part of the curriculum. I have been staging in-class RRA training sessions for a couple of years, and then, last year, I had the idea that we should use the University's region to take this course into the field - Ohio, the foothills of Appalachia and one of the poorest regions of the United States.

I contacted a local social service agency about possible sites for RRA training and through a long process found two small communities about 70 kilometres north of here with some typical rural poverty and development problems (in the US context). Community leaders encouraged me to bring the students up to explore their towns and so we did - arranging for a weekend's worth of Rapid Rural Appraisal. These field sessions were preceded by a day-long seminar in which we reviewed techniques and problems of working in interdisciplinary teams.

Each student was assigned to research the issues surrounding one of the following four areas:

1. Women and the ageing
2. The environment
3. Economic development
4. Education/information

The multidisciplinary teams met and researched one of the two communities independently and then the following week we went to the field. In the two towns the students met with residents, talked with business people, community leaders and so on. Some tried to seek out the 'silent' members of the community: the aged, children, the illiterate etc. and met with some success. Each team then returned to Athens where reports were written up and forwarded to the communities. Interestingly, many of the reports were excellent but there was always the problem of getting away from excruciating academic prose.

My idea here was to introduce an important rural development research technique and to give students some experience in the field to place next to their academic course work here. As much as I have read about RRA, there still do not seem to be many opportunities for training individuals to use the technique except 'on the job'.

5. RRA TRAINING IN A US MASTERS PROGRAMME: THE STUDENTS' VIEW

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Sweeping streets with residents of small Ohio towns provided insight for students in the Spring Quarter development workshop. This marked the first year that the class had conducted work in the field. Stephen Howard, a faculty member of the Communication and Development Studies Program and Director of the African Studies Programme, came up with the idea of a seminar on the Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) approach to data collection two years ago. Students had commented that they wanted a practical course.

Rapid Rural Appraisal is seen as a team approach to data collection when resources for other methods are scarce. The key to RRA is that it should be participatory and flexible. Often it serves more to raise questions and help the community identify problems than to suggest solutions.

The Appalachian Ohio Public Interest Campaign helped in identifying two communities that were willing to participate. A lecture day was first held to discuss appropriate methods for appraising Shawnee and Corning, both in Perry County (about 45 minutes north of Athens). 28 students spent a Saturday in early May in the towns - half of the class in Shawnee and the other half in Corning. Students worked shoulder to shoulder with residents of Corning on beautification projects which had already been sponsored by local groups. Jan Holt, a student in the Latin American Studies Program, painted a guard rail along with two local women. After lunch, she and her team of three other students explored the town and interviewed people using the RRA approach: *"We talked to people on the outskirts, sitting on porches, people not normally interviewed"*, she said.

Asking questions, such as how people view their community overall and where they see it moving economically, helped the teams compile reports they later presented to the communities. The reports highlighted concerns and the social resources available to meet those needs. It was made clear that this was a training experience, so the students didn't want to go too far in making suggestions.

This course is valuable to students because it offers hands-on experience in an academic setting. As Jan Holt noted, it's quite a skill to approach an area you are unfamiliar with and have people open up to you. She also commented that the experience gave students an opportunity to find out the concerns of people in Appalachia. The benefit was being able to evaluate the methods later. With students split up into teams of three or four members from different cultures and areas of study, the day emphasised an interdisciplinary approach.

Students were so satisfied with the course that they asked for a follow-up discussion on the whole exercise. During the final discussion students from the various teams discussed their strategies for gathering information. The teams had devised different methodologies for collecting different data. Suggestions were made on how teams might operate and plan for next year's RRA.

The two towns in southern Perry County that participated in the Rapid Rural Appraisal invited the class to come back next year.

6. LEARNING BY DOING TO ENHANCE LOCAL INITIATIVES

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Introduction

The "*Adult Education and Community Development Project*" has helped to redefine and restructure the functions of the Faculty of Humanities at the Central American University (UCA) in Nicaragua as a centre for teaching, research and the promotion of social change. This support programme is being developed through an inter-university cooperation between the Catholic University of Nijmegen, the Free University of Amsterdam and the Central American University (UCA).[1]

In this paper some experiences with one department, the School of Social Work, are discussed. First the paper describes the development of a postgraduate course for professional workers entitled "Social Research and Popular Participation". The course was held at the Central American University (UCA) in Managua. Discovery learning was the main methodology applied. The second part of this paper describes experiences of using a combined approach of discovery learning and participatory action research in a fishing village on the Pacific Coast of Nicaragua.

The Background and Methodology of the Training Programme

The Faculty's principle problem is that since its main focus is almost exclusively teaching, there are few academics with the necessary training to carry out research. Furthermore, a particular type of researcher was felt to be needed - someone with a broad perspective, who would be able to make research a tool in the hands of the people, encouraging participation and a growth of grass roots awareness. In this context, research becomes a process of getting to know and interpreting social reality, with the aim of gathering sufficient knowledge to allow for the reproduction, transformation and induction of new processes in society. The people at the grass roots should be active and aware participants. Using their local knowledge they are in the best position to transform their own situation.

Taking into account this theoretical framework, it was decided to form and train a team of teachers, professionals and students, capable of planning and carrying out a strategy of Social Research and Popular Participation. The training methodology was based on the principles of discovery learning. In discovery learning, participants learn from their experiences. Much of the training is based on exchange, analysis and systematization of these experiences. Learning does not refer only to theory and facts but should also give due attention to values, commitments and relationships. Experience-based learning also means participants learning a lot from systematic reflection on what they do individually and inside the training group. These are essential skills for a participatory approach.

The course was held at weekly intervals and each session lasted eight hours. 25 professionals participated from 12 different institutions, mainly in the area of Education, Health, Social Welfare and Agriculture. Each had to be a professional, directly or indirectly linked to a popular organization.

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[1] The author was coordinator of this project between 1984 and 1988

The First Cycle

The first cycle was divided into three phases:

1. Diagnosis of practical experiences;
2. Theorising on practical experiences;
3. Development of a new form of action.

Diagnosis of Practical Experiences

In this first phase, we tried to build upon the practical experience of the participants. Throughout we made use of group techniques such as brainstorming, role play and 'newsprint', to promote the participation of the participants. To stimulate favourable learning conditions the emphasis was put on the development of an open atmosphere of mutual respect, trust and commitment within the group.

We asked participants to describe and analyse their individual work experiences of social research. This was done by asking questions on their knowledge and ideas and by asking them to perform tasks which reflected their working experience. During the discussions the differences between ideas and reality made them aware of some of the contradictions in their day-to-day activities.

For the next part of this initial diagnosis, participants were asked to visualise their national political, social and economic context by creating a newspaper mural. At this point we stressed the importance of taking a global rather than a purely contemporary perspective.

Bearing in mind that the participants had little research experience, they were asked to draw up a research strategy. They were then encouraged to discuss the contradictions which might arise when putting this research into practice. In a forum-like role-play these research strategies were presented to the other groups who had previously prepared the following roles: research experts, senior representatives of the institutions involved and the subjects of the research. In a final synthesis each research team reflected on the experience. They realised that the strategies which they had drawn up were still too tied to traditional concepts of research, and did not allow for popular participation. This stimulated the need for further study to answer the question: how does one relate social research to popular participation?

The Process of Theorising on Practical Experience

The initial findings of the above diagnosis did bring about a new level of awareness and a new interpretation amongst participants. In the next stage the theory of practical experience was introduced. This used additional theory and experiences from other sources (articles, lectures, slides) to enrich their knowledge.

One step involved integrating theory into a blueprint for a research project. For this purpose we used one of the strategies described above. The result was a redefinition of three fundamental stages in a research process:

- identifying the research question,
- the critical analysis of the problem, and
- formulating action plans, involving the subjects of the research.

After this, we compared and discussed different models of participatory action research. This lead to a new approach for social research and popular participation.

A high level of participation and interest was maintained by using various communication techniques, designed by the 'academic commission'. An example of such a technique was 'knowledge roulette'. This consisted of getting the groups to answer questions set by the 'croupiers'. They would give a definition, a concept or a sentence from the text for identification or completion. When they received the correct answer they would say *"Bingo!"*. The answers were then discussed by the group as a whole.

Coming Full Circle: A New Form of Action

At this point, we had finished reflecting and theorising. We now had to begin the action. First, a model of participatory action research had to be defined, relevant to Nicaragua and the work context. For this purpose we used a technique which we called 'elections'. This involved conducting something akin to an electoral campaign, for people to promote the virtues of the various models of research. Each group supported one particular research model and had to organize campaign literature, meetings with their candidate, radio programmes, flyers, electoral alliances. The outcome of this whole enriching activity, which took place over a period of two sessions, was the majority election of the so-called "PIPA" model. This was an alliance of three of the four different approaches to social research, combining the strong parts of each.

To get acquainted with this model, the coordinators designed different activities, such as an "Action-Research Laboratory for the PIPA alliance programme". This provided an opportunity to put the model into action and to test its coherence. Two teams were formed to carry out the experiment. Their task was to seek solutions to the problems of applying the PIPA model of research in two ministries: Health and Education. The members of each team were assigned roles (researchers, directors of research units, trade union representatives etc.) Then the teams went through all the various steps of the model, simulating the activities which applied to them in their particular roles, ending up with a feedback of the information which had been collected.

After this, each team prepared a paper, clearly setting out their theoretical framework, the way the experiment developed and their results. These papers were delivered to the "Second Congress of the Latin American PIPA Network" which was programmed for the following week. In this simulated Congress, we had a fruitful discussion about the application of the research model, the need for participatory research techniques, the need to clarify the procedures of the model and, finally, the need to apply the model in a real life situation.

Three groups were formed and given the task of applying the PIPA model in a limited context with a time limit of six weeks. To this end, the model was put into practise and tested in three small research projects:

1. With second year university students to improve the functioning of collective study groups.
2. With the Syndicate of Technical and Administrative Staff to improve the syndicate's organization and levels of participation.
3. For training community health workers in the prevention of diarrhoea.

After six weeks the participants presented and evaluated the different projects, taking into account their participatory content and their practical results.

The Second Cycle

The second cycle started in July 1986. In this phase, we took stock of the progress and results that had been achieved with the newly developed research model. When necessary, new research projects

were defined for the institutions where the different participants were working. After a short training process, we started four different projects, three in poor neighbourhoods in Managua and one in the port area of Corinto at the Pacific Coast.

The aim of the research projects in the poor neighbourhoods was to start a joint training/research process together with the neighbourhood organizations to find out the most deeply felt problems affecting the community. Once this was achieved, a plan of action was made jointly with the representatives of the responsible government agencies. We also tried to give training to the neighbourhood committees so that, in future, they would be able to cope better with their problems themselves.

The other project involved a team working with the National Harbour Board. The aim was to develop a participatory training course for foremen stevedores. For this purpose, the team started a participatory research programme with the senior stevedores, to integrate their knowledge into a course plan in which they would be the course leaders. The research consisted of a number of different stages:

- getting acquainted with the community;
- putting together a mixed research team (professionals and members of the community);
- defining research topics;
- training the team and designing the methods and techniques to be used in executing the research, feeding the results back into the community and formulating action and evaluation.

In a "creativity workshop" participants brainstormed participative techniques to be used in the different stages of the four research projects. Up to then we had been using a wide variety of techniques in the whole process of training. These techniques for training had to be adapted so that they could be used to get acquainted with local people in the research area, to organize groups, to select the issue to be investigated, to analyse the issue in depth and to discuss and give feedback on the information gathered in the different stages of the research.

Participatory Research Applied: Fishermen in Masachapa

A participatory action research project was carried out by researchers from the School of Social Work and students during 1986. It all started when the School of Social Work received a request for support from a villager from Masachapa. The villagers faced many problems, including bad drinking water, serious health problems, alcoholism, bad housing conditions, high mortality rates, prostitution and illiteracy. Was it possible at least to discuss with the newly formed team for community organization what could be done? A plan was made for several meetings in which we would work on training and research to improve the community organization and the participation of villagers in village development.

- The first meeting held in the village was in an open area near the harbour. All villagers who were willing to participate were invited. In the meeting villagers and 'outsiders' were introduced to one another, they played some group games and shared in a common community walk. The purpose was to create an atmosphere of friendliness and equality as well as to indicate the seriousness of the outsiders' willingness to learn.

- In a second meeting the identification of problems encountered and opportunities for development formed an important part of the group-assignments. The villagers (men and women) were allowed to show the outsiders how well they knew their village and the reasons for various practices. This gave a good idea of the physical environment of the village and established the basis for the somewhat more difficult exercises that followed. After all the

exercises, all presentations were made by the villagers in the open air, which allowed people who were not participating to see what was going on.

- In the next meeting the group of participating villagers was tripled. Research started on the fishery economy, on social stratification and family relations, on the history of the village and on the existence and functioning of social institutions. Villagers actively participated in all of these. At the same time the training meeting continued to analyse the problem of participation in community organisation, the identification of opportunities and planning of community actions by listing priorities and 'best bets'. People's roles and responsibilities were also defined. After the third meeting a group of villagers started their first action: they cleaned the village and the beach, and started to collect funds for a small brick road to the harbour. At the same time discussions were started to organise a fishermen's cooperative.

After six weeks it was time to evaluate what had happened and what had succeeded. Results of the analysis were presented to the community in a creative way at a village celebration meeting. Fishermen brought fish, women prepared a big meal and all the teams presented their outcomes, with the villagers participating in the role plays and feedback games. Results were discussed thoroughly and a good base was laid for further actions.

Prominent features of this project were its emphasis on the participation of villagers in their own development, and its active presence in the village not as benefactor, but as catalyst and partner in development. This was because the methods used did not merely diagnose and appraise, but went further by sharing analysis and understanding of the local situation. This in turn lead to development activities that were creative, productive and sustainable. The methods evolved. There was plenty to learn from, with, and about fishermen and women and their situation. The discovery learning approach complemented and integrated well with a participatory action research approach developed during the course in Managua and results of this have since been quite substantial.

Since 1988, we have been working on applying the developed methodology to a variety of situations. One example is social forestry. It aims at enhancing local initiatives from farmers and the development of participatory tools for social forestry. We train professionals to understand the importance of trees outside the forest, to appreciate the indigenous knowledge of farmers, to incorporate local knowledge in existing work practices, to develop and implement a participatory approach within their specific circumstances, to adapt the present working situation to new conditions, and to strengthen relevant existing local, regional and or national institutions.

Lessons Learnt

There have been several lessons. This research again showed us that villagers are often capable of collecting far more accurate information than outsiders. They were also able to correct it and order it. The analysis gave rise to a process of development. Their perceptions of their situation were critical for planning actions. We also came to understand that there is a general need to understand and appreciate traditional knowledge and systems of livelihood, and the way people feel, see, think, and act in these areas. With the methodology of joint training and participatory action research we could start a process of joint discovery and shared analysis. It enhanced both participation and the learning of all parties involved.

7. PRA TRAINING FOR HEALTH WORKERS

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Background

I was invited to conduct a Health-PRA workshop as a part of the course on "Socio-economic Environment of Health" at the Health Services Management Centre, School of Public Policy, University of Birmingham, UK. The workshop was held from the 8th to the 10th of December, 1993 at the Health Services Management Centre, Birmingham University. It included a field visit to Sparkbrook, Birmingham on the 10th December. The participants were health personnel mostly from the Third World. I had asked the course organisers to arrange a field visit for the participants so as to enable them to actually try and apply the PRA methods in the field.

The workshop commenced in the afternoon of 8th December with nine participants. The participants formed into three groups of three each. The participants named the groups after three drugs: 'septran', 'anacin' and 'paracetamol'. Each group consisted of one woman and two men. The participants had not been exposed to participatory methods before and were looking forward to the workshop. However, some of them had been involved in designing health questionnaire-surveys and were able to pin-point some major problems associated with designing and using such questionnaires.

Introduction to Methods

Approaches to Health Care

The introductory session was followed by the trainer presenting three anecdotes on community health. These anecdotes were from different villages of the Third World and raised issues on various approaches to health care in rural areas and their performance. This was followed by a show of cartoons on two different approaches to health care. They compared the lecture method with the participatory approach. This led to a discussion on professional attitudes and beliefs which are not conducive to participation in health. Rural Development Tourism was also demonstrated through cartoons.

Next was a slide show on how to approach people with regard to health care. At this point, the three groups were asked to list different ways of approaching people for participation in health so as to build rapport with them. While discussing different ways of approaching local people in a community an interesting issue was raised as to whether one should accept food from a T.B. patient in order to build rapport with him or her. The group was of the opinion that a definite answer was not possible and much depended on the particular situation. The group appreciated that many health workers would be against accepting food from very sick patients even if it meant better rapport building. They suggested ways in which such food could be diplomatically avoided without hurting the feelings of the patient and at the same time learning about his problems.

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[1]The author wishes to express thanks to Andrew Shephard, Sarah Crowther, Development Administration Group, and David Thompson, HSMC International, University of Birmingham, UK for the support provided for the Health-PRA Workshop.

Semi-Structured Interviews

The next session was on semi-structured interviews and how to conduct them. The session included illustrations of the kind of questions; open/probing or closed and/or leading, body language, approach and so on; meant for participatory inquiry. A slide show on different body postures and other attitudes reflected in body language were presented. This was followed by role playing by each group for probing on a particular theme on health. In each group, one participant played the role of a villager, another a health worker and the third was an observer. After ten minutes of role play the roles were interchanged within the group. The observer kept track of the approach of the outsider, his/her body language, kinds of questions asked, nature of probing and other details and would come and present his/her observations and remarks. This would then be discussed amongst the participants.

Mapping

The next item on the agenda was the method of mapping when each participant was asked to draw his/her neighbourhood map. The method was explained followed by illustrations of health maps, health service maps, body maps, health well-being maps, mental health maps and other maps and the significance discussed. Then was a slide show on mapping which raised different questions, including whether people were able to draw maps in each country and whether maps were culturally neutral. One of the participants from Pakistan asked whether drawing maps was possible in his country. I described IIED's training at Punjab in Pakistan where farmers drew complicated farm maps and impact diagrams and explained them as well.

Matrix Scoring

This was followed by a session on matrix scoring using many examples from the area of health. The slide show on matrix scoring related to different countries and raised a variety of issues. Then followed a practical run of matrix scoring by the participants. All three groups appeared very enthusiastic about the practical run and used matrices to explain topics such as 'social practices in Africa', 'facilities enjoyed by the participants' and 'evaluation of the present course'. Some interesting aspects of the practical run were that the participants used seeds to score on their themes; two groups used fixed scoring while the third did free scoring. One group did the scoring by individual voting and used two kinds of seeds for positive and negative scoring by individual group members.

Seasonality and Physical Transects

After the session on matrix scoring we had two short sessions on seasonality and physical transects, again in the light of participation in health. These were followed by a discussion of a case study on Health PRA in an Indian village done by Dr. Jaythilak and Ishita Roy.

The case study raised several issues, especially about applications of appropriate methods to study different aspects of health. Different aspects of community health which were left out by the case study were suggested by the participants, together with methods and policy suggestions were made on that behalf. This was followed by a 'what if' analysis in the area of community health. This helped the group to form group contracts for the field visit.

The Field Visit

This was conducted in Sparkbrook on the third day of the workshop, and was followed by a feedback session the same evening. Sparkbrook is one of the urban areas in Birmingham which is considered to be socio-economically depressed and whose major ethnic groups originate mostly from South Asia. During the field visit, the participants had the opportunity of applying some of the participatory methods which they had learnt in the training session.

Some Reflections on the Workshop

The workshop was quite productive and thought-provoking and had many learning points for future workshops in this area. Some of these points are as follows:

- *Infrastructural Support.* The room for the workshop was spacious and good enough for the training activities of the nine participants. Seeds/papers/other workshop materials/slide and overhead projectors were also arranged and kept ready for the workshop.

- *Other Support.* The active involvement of a research student, Sarah Crowther (from Birmingham University), in the workshop was of great support to the trainer. It was this researcher who made contacts for the field visit by making arrangements with a local NGO called 'Ashram'. Her views and comments on different points raised by the participants enriched the discussions at the workshop.

- *Workshop Style.* The workshop style aimed to make the participants feel involved, actively share their experiences and have enough flexibility to influence the course inputs in the workshop in terms of their requirements. After each session their views and comments were taken into account to appraise the running of the workshop. One point for trainers in this context is to have as many illustrations as possible from different countries of the world and exchange experiences with the participants as and when possible. This is important when there is an international mix of participants in a course.

- *Matured Participants.* The participants had several years of experience in health care and its administration in different countries of the Third World and could easily relate their experiences in the context of participation. There was a mix of experience from Ethiopia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, India, Nigeria, Sudan, Thailand and UK.

- *Field Visit.* Arranging a field visit through an NGO made matters simpler in terms of acceptance to the community visited and rapport building. The NGO already had good working relations with the community and were involved in training and counselling mainly of the women members of the community.

- *Methods in an Urban Context.* It is interesting to see how the methods worked in an urban context. The participants tried to facilitate applications of mapping, matrix scoring, seasonality and transects as well as semi-structured interviews. In each case, individual views of a few community members were expressed which could not be validated with other community members due to shortage of time.

  The kind of mapping used in a village may not be possible in an urban community. In a village relationships are often informal and face to face. People live and work there and they

carry their mental maps of their localities. In the urban setting of the North, people are relatively more formal and interactions are mainly through phone rather then face to face. Many of them are able to draw the area map but not able to identify all the households in the locality by names and other characteristics due to limited information.

- *Group Interaction.* An image which the participants had unconsciously put in their minds (perhaps from the slide shows) was that of PRA with community participation by gathering community members at one common place. In the field trip it was realised that such community participation was not feasible in all communities for different reasons. Although people of one Asian community predominated the locality the relationships were formal as compared to those of rural life or even urban slum.

  The participants were looking for bigger groups of the community to interact with or for some form of community participation in bigger spaces. However, local people could either be met individually or in small groups of six or seven members. The space in the local NGO was also not suitable for large group interactions. NGOs used their space for interaction with smaller groups for training and counselling purposes.

- *Time Constraints.* Time was a major constraint in the workshop and hence limited methods were covered. The field visit was also of a very short duration, undertaken basically for providing the participants with field exposure rather than going in for any proper appraisal. Many of the methods were distributed as handouts since they could not be covered in the workshop. Other handouts on health PRA were also circulated but it would have been better if some of them had been circulated as reading material before the workshop commenced.

- *Trainer from the South.* The participants were mainly exposed to trainers from the North in the course which they were attending. A PRA trainer from the South coming to train in the North was a major surprise for them. They were amazed as to how this could happen especially when the trainer was a person from social discipline and was not a community health specialist or a medical personnel. My background in PRA was stated while I was being introduced and when informally interacting with them I spoke about how participatory research in community health was catching on and how we were moving from place to place to learn from rural people and slum dwellers about their health conditions, problems and priorities in their own language. I felt that rapport building between trainer and participants in the workshop, became quick and easy because of my experience of the Third World. Often it appeared that my illustrations and slides were speaking the same language as theirs.

8. SOME REFLECTIONS OF A NEW PRA PARTICIPANT: THE ACTION RESEARCHER

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Whilst at the Institute of Development Studies in the UK last year, I attended a two-day PRA workshop. This was my first exposure to the principles and methods of PRA. Having been an active participant in evolving and conducting one kind of participatory action research with rural women in India, I was very interested in getting to know the principles and methods that characterise PRA. I now look forward to participating in PRA exercises in a village situation, as I have plans to take part in one in India.

I would like to also share some of my initial impressions of the workshop and of PRA.

I was intrigued by the vocabulary that has been thrown up. For example, terms such as transects, triangulation, time line. While I acknowledge that it is important to label in order to have a common language of discourse, I feel that these terms are in danger of mystifying the method. This in turn could lead to a ritualising and homogenising of the processes of PRA, giving control of it into the hands of a few, or introducing the notion of an expert for decoding and disseminating the ideas. Given all this, would it not be better to describe, in simple terms, than to label using technical terms or terms borrowed from perhaps more technical disciplines?

It struck me that most of the communication methods and aids used tended to be male-orientated - numerical, quantitative styles of codification. There was a complete invisibility of other forms that people rely on to express or communicate knowledge, feelings, hopes, dreams, visions. We have found whilst working with women that cultural forms such as songs and acted narratives provide the most natural and exciting expressions of what they see and understand. It was in song and couplets that we found they had codified the history, including ecological history, of the region.

As far as I could understand, PRA has three crucial elements:

1. Changing the attitudes of researchers so that they enable the emergence of processes which allow people themselves to collectively analyse and understand their situation (in their own categories), and to plan for the future.

2. Allowing people to organise this knowledge in an idiom which is theirs, giving them control over the knowledge they create.

3. Sharing this knowledge among diverse and ever-widening circles, (again in diverse idioms) including other groups of people, NGOs, policy-makers, government and the 'hi-fi' research world.

If these are the crucial elements of PRA, then it is more than just a method of generating knowledge or developing skills - it is a process of empowering people. This raises several important issues that have to be given due consideration in work in the field.

- How do you bring the people of a village together? And particularly how do you bring the women together? I have experience of villages in India which are extremely stratified, and

although they have some formal fora for bringing all the men together (none or very few fora exist for women), the poor or the lower caste never speak in these. What then are the processes that can enable the poor to articulate?

- Secondly, how does this empowerment through PRA get sustained and nurtured? These processes are not one-off activities, they ought to be on-going, continuous, taking various directions and presenting different challenges.

Both these issues highlight the fact that PRA cannot ever be the individual activity of a researcher. The very entry into such a process is of an activist nature, and must be seen as part of a process of activist involvement, breaking the dichotomy between researcher and activist. The PRA researcher either goes through an NGO or other existing agency which has already facilitated processes of people's reflection in the villages, or initiates such processes herself/himself which would involve building up a forum for collective analyses and an ongoing support group. These requirements of the PRA intervention were not sufficiently recognised at the workshop, nor are they at all recognised or valued in the larger world of research.

It seems to me that the issue of epistemology is also of significance here. Not only is the role of the researcher different, but the framework or set of assumptions that underlie the exercise of knowledge-generation must be different from those of conventional social science or development research. The latter try to understand the *actual* in order to move to the *probable*. Participatory research addresses itself to the *potential*, from which the *possible* can be envisioned or made real. Since the two frameworks are basically not compatible, why attempt to seek validation of this knowledge by applying the tools or standards of conventional sciences.

Close and ongoing involvement in a process is important also because it is only with the unfolding of such processes, with time, that the dynamics of power in decision-making or in prioritising of actions become visible. Often processes that seemed to have been followed in a participatory manner, turn out to reveal the perspectives of the facilitators, imposed upon the people.

I would like to share one experience that put a lot of our work in perspective. For about six years we worked hard on evolving methods which elicited poor women's issues giving recognition to and building on their forms (mostly collective) of expression, understanding and analyses. Jointly we and they created methods of solving the problems. There was a lot of emphasis on the language, culture and idiom of the poor women. And all this was sustained within a predictable support system. These women emerged as very empowered, with a wealth of knowledge and confidence.

But something went wrong. At a meeting held to discuss government policy in relation to the programme, a conflict arose. The women brought up the issue of literacy - the differences between literate and illiterate women, especially in the eyes of officialdom, with whom they were negotiating. The illiterate women expressed their insecurity in this respect, and in fact, it was truly remarkable to observe how women who had asserted their confidence and strength with local officials, families and village authorities, were rendered weak with fear of the written word. However, they also asserted their willingness and ability to learn to read and write.

The experience showed us how, in the process of building on the existing strengths of these women, we had worked on our perception of priorities, ignoring or failing to explore their potential in terms of skills valued by the mainstream, which could further strengthen them. It became clear that it was as important for the poor to gain control over mainstream methods and skills as it was to legitimise, strengthen and build on their own. A pragmatic or strategic balance between the two is important.

The notion of give and take, of a two-way process, of sharing of information, skills and knowledge is another aspect which is crucial to PRA. Again I felt this was not adequately emphasised at the workshop. Planning, decision-making and the search for alternatives depend very much on the availability of information. This is the one thing that the poor do not have access or entitlement to, that remains in offices, *panchayats* etc. If PRA is not to become a one-way process, eliciting or generating knowledge from the people without strengthening their capacities to plan and act independently, this aspect must receive recognition. This is our role in PRA.

These comments are just in response to what I understood at the workshop, or have read of PRA, and therefore may come across as being out of context or as critical of PRA itself. The latter is not at all the case - my main reason for writing is to clarify my own thoughts about participatory processes and I look forward to continuing the dialogue.

9. SOME REFLECTIONS OF A NEW PRA PARTICIPANT: THE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

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June 28th 1993 - cloudy weather in Rayatwadi and Dhaba villages, Betul District in Madhya Pradesh. Place - an 18th century resthouse without electricity near these villages. Seven of us were arguing over the various options available for understanding the villagers' problems and for coming to some possible solutions to help them to help themselves. Several partners were involved: the government (Forest Department, Woman and Child Development Department, Water Supply and Health and Education Departments and others), the villagers themselves and the PRA facilitators. I was the principal orchestrator, whose role was to encourage the PRA enthusiasts to use the methods (social mapping, wealth ranking, transects and so on) carefully and try to identify the main problems in the short period of four days.

The aim was to liaise between government officials and the villagers to reveal how the villagers feel about government programmes, how useful or useless they are. It was important to ensure that the villagers' expectations were not raised to believe that PRA would solve all their problems. This was a difficult task, but quite enjoyable since it revealed the mysticism, realism, romanticism and pragmatism of PRA.

Social Mapping

For the first time I was exposed to a social mapping exercise, and this raised several questions for experts in this method. It is true that the mapping exercise helps to break the ice and brings the villagers closer. But it is impossible to continue mapping everything about village life. Village life consists of 'village inside' and 'village outside'. It may be difficult to map the components of 'village inside' life, which include:

- personal problems;
- diseases;
- agonies;
- sorrows associated with death and disability.

However social mapping is quite useful, and indeed essential, for depicting 'village outside' life, which includes resources such as:

- farmers' fields;
- forests;
- rivers;
- ponds;
- wells and handpumps etc.

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[1]These are the personal views of the author and not of his organisation, nor of the PRA facilitators.

But we must be careful not to overdo the mapping exercise to the point where the villagers lose interest. We therefore must be aware of the right point at which to stop the exercise and start talking, rather than be slaves to PRA tools. When government officials are present, mapping can be a threatening experience for villagers. Sensitive issues such as encroachment onto forest land and the misuse of public places which can all be depicted on maps, may not be admitted to by villagers.

Secondly, what use are these maps? What can we use them for? Do government officials value them? Can they take corrective action based on these maps? Is hanging them in village *choupals* useful for villagers and visitors alike to see them? Can this map be made a legal map in the sense that disputes (particularly encroachments onto public lands) are settled on the basis of this map? As development managers we have to use them for planning village development.

Wealth Ranking

Wealth ranking is valuable for getting to know the poverty status of Indian families. However the Indian poverty line as defined by planners, and the poverty line that emerges as a result of PRA exercises, do not match.

For example in the village of Dhaba the villagers listed as many as 30 criteria to identify the poor; land asset was only one of these criteria. To illustrate the significance of this we can take the case of a widow who had lands but could not cultivate. She was identified by the villagers as poor. However the Indian poverty line would rank her as non-poor, and she would not qualify for any benefits under anti-poverty programmes.

This has policy implications. How do we reconcile the officially-recognised poor and the PRA-recognised poor? Standardisation is unavoidable in a large area and when a mass of poverty-level families have to be identified. Although Indian planners swear to people's participation in identifying the poor families in their massive IRDP, the reality of the situation is that the poor are identified by the Block Development Officer (BDO) by applying land assets criteria. This is where the wealth ranking and the BDO's approach conflict. Can the BDO be a party to the PRA exercise and select through the PRA poor families for anti-poverty action? PRA methods are very 'people-friendly'. We also have to make them 'state-friendly' if we want to make state resources go in the right direction. Otherwise we end up romanticising PRA tools.

Conclusion

My final question is where do we go from here? Has anything positive happened in the villages where people participated in PRAs? Has planning and implementation qualitatively improved, have state, people and PRA facilitators become continuously involved in development activities? Is the life of the villagers any better than before? We need to know more about these to consolidate the gains of PRA and to strengthen it.

10. EXTRACTS FROM A TRAINER'S NOTEBOOK[1]

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Introduction

This was the first three[2] week training course I had run for eighteen months. A lot has changed in PRA in that time. I sought to incorporate these changes in my agenda. I drew on others' recent workshop experiences in Pakistan, Ethiopia and Sri Lanka (Guijt, forthcoming; IIED, 1993a; ActionAid/IIED, 1992), as well as Redd Barna's experience of working with young children on communication skills (Redd Barna, 1991). The results proved exciting. Before I arrived in Zimbabwe, I had sent the course coordinator (Andreas Fuglesang, Africa Regional Director) guidelines for good training courses (IIED, 1993c). This helped them to clarify what they wanted out of the training.

I was most impressed by the commitment shown by Redd Barna to the workshop. The agency aimed to get the most out of this training, by including staff from levels where follow-up action could be taken. Thus their Africa Director, the Senior Research Officer for Africa, the Zimbabwe Resident Representative and the Uganda Deputy Representative all committed themselves to the full training course. Senior staff from Ethiopia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe were also all in full attendance. In all there were twenty course participants.

Trainer's Preparation

It is hard work for one trainer to keep the momentum going for so many people over a prolonged period. So I find that good preparation is vital. You can never over-prepare and each evening you have to review your schedule for the next day, in the light of what you have or haven't covered already. Every group responds differently to a training session, so you can never predict who will find which bit hard or easy to grasp. Openness and humour are also precious aides. Things are bound to go wrong, or at least not according to plan, so I try to be as flexible as possible and don't try to admit my mistakes!

The Approach Before Introducing the Techniques

The more I train in PRA, the more I appreciate the importance of skills in cooperation, good communication, observation, the development of good rapport and understanding of others' perspectives, and the avoidance or effective management of sabotage. Thus before I introduced any of the specific visual methods of PRA, I ensured that we did adequate ground work in these areas, to secure a solid framework for semi-structured dialogue throughout the fieldwork. Redd Barna staff

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[1]There is a forthcoming report on this training workshop: Redd Barna. 1994. *Not Only But Also: Report of a Workshop in PRA and the Analysis of Difference.* Redd Barna, Zimbabwe.

[2]Most trainers prefer to take only 14 days or less over this training.

have already been trained in much of this to a further extent than many development workers, because of their work experience in child counselling. Nonetheless, they felt it worthwhile to review the issues. One thing they found very helpful was the explicit recognition of our own and others' sabotage in our daily work, and our discussions around how to avoid it and how to manage it.

The Analysis of Difference

Redd Barna had explicitly asked for my help in their analysis of the existence and varied needs of different sub-sections of the communities with whom they work. This included their concern for a greater attention to the needs of the worse off, of women and of children. They recognise, however, that attention to the needs of these more vulnerable groups alone could arouse antagonism and resistance from those who are more powerful. Thus we endeavoured to develop a working strategy which would explore the needs of people of all perspectives. As a group, therefore, we had to develop a common acceptance that everyone's perspective mattered, had to be listened to and had to be taken seriously. This involved the early adoption of ground rules, not only for behaviour within the group, but for our rapport with village members.

One central ground rule included the adoptionof four permanent teams for simultaneous fieldwork in the chosen village. The older male Redd Barna staff worked with the male elders, younger Redd Barna men with younger village men, Redd Barna women staff with village women and a mixed team, male and female, of Redd Barna staff with village children. There were not enough staff members to work with separate age groups of women also.

Training Extracts

The timetable introduces certain key themes each day. To ensure that the workshop does not become too intensive or boring, it is important to make use of games regularly. Most games can have a learning element in them. It is also good to have short quick games which just make everyone laugh a lot and move around, such as fruit salad. These keep the group's energy levels high. Regular sessions to review the learning points at the start and finish of each day are also important, as are feedback and evaluation sessions, where everyone has a chance to air what they have found good or bad, easy or difficult about the work, the food, the heat or whatever.

Below is an outline of the pre-field work period, showing the themes covered each day. A few of the exercises used are described in detail.

- *Day One:* Introductions
  Expectations and fears
  Cooperation, not conflict
  Ground rules
  Schedule for training
  Sabotage
  Management/worker relations
  Communicating instructions
  Challenging our assumptions
  Making good observations

A particularly good game for addressing cooperation early on - and for the trainer to gauge the tensions in the group - is described below.

The Chairs Game (9.45-10.05)

"Alice handed us each a bit of paper with an instruction. We were told not to share this instruction with anyone else. We then discovered that people were carrying chairs all over the room. We began to realise that some people wanted to do what we wanted to do: but that other people wanted to do something quite different. Eventually, one group of people surrendered their chairs to some others, who promised to hand them back to them later...! In fact a third of us had been told to put all the chairs by the wall; a third to put them all by the door; and a third to put them all by the windows. We then had a discussion about cooperation versus conflict; about interpretation of instructions - why didn't we question the instructions when they were so difficult; and about cultural differences in coping with problems. This game was followed by the establishment of ground rules for cooperation and behaviour during the training course."

It is also good to address sabotage soon after this. The following game works very well.

Sabotage (11.30-12.00)

"We then played a game called saboteur. We worked in groups of three. Each of us took it in turns to play one of three roles: talker, listener and saboteur. Every two minutes we swapped roles. We then discussed how it felt in different roles. We all agreed that being the saboteur was the easiest role. We considered different means of sabotage. We realised that development practitioners should equip themselves with different techniques to enable themselves to deal with saboteurs. We wrote up our suggestions on flipcharts. In general we agreed it was good to handle the domineering tactfully."

- *Day Two:* Body Language
  Semi-structured dialogue
  Presentation by the Africa Director on the potential relevance of PRA to Redd Barna's effectiveness
  Introduction to PRA

- *Day Three*: Maps, transect walks, seasonal calendars

With each visual technique, I find it important to cover certain procedures for learning. These are:

- discussion of the relevance of potential information available from use of the technique;
- viewing and analysis of examples from elsewhere of the use of the technique;
- practical demonstration of the technique and/or
- opportunity for participants to try out techniques on each other;
- review of each others' attempts;
- discussion of details of process;
- summary of technique learnt.

Below is an extract from Day Three to show how mapping was presented in the pre-fieldwork training agenda, describing the exercises, their purpose and the points learnt.

Mapping for Mars (8.30-9.20)

"Alice explained that she was a development worker from Mars. She said this month(!) she was 'developing Africa'. She asked us to divide into groups. Each group was to draw a map of Africa on flipchart paper with marker pens. Each map was to include five to ten issues which our particular group felt was important to us about Africa. We were not to use any writing because she did not understand earth script. She divided us into the following groups: Ethiopians, Zimbabwean women (and Margharida, from Mozambique, who chose this group), Mozambicans, Zimbabwean men and Europeans. As we drew and discussed, Alice came round and made the following points:

- *the importance of drawing on the ground, so all can see;*
- *the importance of symbols, rather than words, so as to include all;*
- *the importance of letting the community do the discussion, analysis;*
- *the chance for the development worker to watch group dynamics, leaders, disputes, those excluded, etc.;*
- *the chance for development worker to listen to the process of analysis."*

Plenary Feedback on Africa Maps (9.20-10.00)

"We all looked at each map in turn. One representative from each map presented it to the rest of us. To begin with, each map was covered with unrecognisable symbols, but once each map had been explained to us and we could understand the meaning of each symbol, it was clear that they included a lot of information.

Each map was different and no one map included the same information as another. For instance one map mentioned literacy, another AIDS, another environmental problems. So we could see that each map was representing the perspective of those who drew it. Alice then asked us which was the best map. The women said theirs was best. So Alice said she would take that back to her head office on Mars. She then asked how the others felt about that and pointed out that there were more in the room whose ideas were not represented on the map than there were those whose ideas were shown.

Solutions were called for and it was finally agreed that there was ***no best map****: each map has its own story to tell and each fills in its own particular part of the jigsaw which makes up a complete picture of Africa. Thus Alice went back to Mars with all the maps, ensuring that all the different perspectives were represented."*

Bangladesh Maps (10.55-11.20)

"An exercise was conducted using three maps drawn by different members of one village in Bangladesh. The three maps were first studied in small groups and we then had a plenary session. This time we were told that one map was drawn by women, one drawn by young men and the third by old men. We had to guess which map was which. Each of our groups reached a different conclusion about who drew which map! Alice then explained to us the story which was told us in the process of each map drawing by those who drew it. Thus we learnt about the maps in the context of their particular problems in life. Again we could see how there was ***no best map****: but that instead each map contributed to the jigsaw which made up the overall picture of the villagers' needs. We also realised how we make assumptions about other societies which may be false!"*

Sierra Leone Wells (11.20-12.00)

"A final exercise with maps was also conducted first in groups and then in plenary. This time we were shown a map of a village with four potential well sites marked. One site had been chosen by women in the village, the other three sites had been chosen by men. First we had to identify which wells had been chosen by whom. Then we had to explain why the men had chosen three sites, whilst the women had only chosen one. Again, each group reached different conclusions on both questions. Alice finally revealed the answers and we discussed the complex implications of choosing something as apparently simple as a well location, in terms of social, economic, political and gender issues.

All three of these exercises highlighted the importance of learning about different people's perspectives - how there is ***no best map****. They also emphasised the importance of how much is learnt from the process of these exercises - listening to the story which is being told as the maps are drawn. The finished item on its own can be misleading and can lead to false assumptions!"*

Other Maps (12.00-12.15)

"Alice then showed us some overhead sheets of other types of maps which villagers could be asked to draw. These included a socio-economic map and a mobility map. She also mentioned historical maps, literacy maps and so on."

- *Day Four*: Well-being ranking
  Priority ranking
  Chapati diagrams
  What If...
  Identification of main speakers for plenary village meeting

- *Day Five*: (Half day) Use of Flow diagrams to explore "but why", "what if"..
  Main issues RBZ wants to address in fieldwork
  Divisions into permanent field work teams (old men, young men, women, children)
  Appropriate techniques for addressing the issues
  Planning for fieldwork: team contracts, sequence of activities, meeting plans

- *Day Six:* (Half day) Preparation for fieldwork continued: what we all say we are doing
  More info on background of the project
  Further discussions on local concept of "household"
  Dry run of introductory explanatory speeches for first meeting with village
  Equipment and logistics review

- *Day Seven:* First day of fieldwork

Finally...

It is important for a trainer never to forget that miscommunication is primarily the responsibility of the communicator. A successful workshop is immensely rewarding, but there is always more to learn, a better way to approach something. We must never close down and assume that we know it all. That is why it is so useful to write up training notes, so that we can share each others'

experiences. I have to be pretty disciplined to make myself do this at the end of each day, but it does help me to review for myself what I have done and I certainly appreciate reading the notes of others.

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11. REFLECTIONS OF A TRAINER

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These are a few reflections from a rewarding and I think extremely fruitful trip to Zimbabwe and South Africa in 1993. The trip was to help facilitate PRA training exercises with the National Farming Network and the Forestry Commission in Zimbabwe, and in South Africa with MIDNET and AFFRA, informal associations of development organisations.

Zimbabwe

My first programme was in Zimbabwe with the Natural Farming Network, a group of NGOs who are promoting organic farming, permaculture and the like. This was my first PRA in Africa. The highlights of the training were as follows:

- the PRA methods worked beautifully in opening up discussions with the villagers;
- a resource map drawn by the women which was actually an area map showing all the settlements in the area, roads, paths, streams, fields, forests etc. The map started with one sheet of paper, gradually another sheet got added and another and another, till finally we must have had a map which was about 15 feet by 15 feet;
- an activity list identified by the villagers. In order of priority these were land tenure, livestock husbandry, horticultural development and water harvesting.

With staff from the Forestry Commission, the purpose was to develop an agro-forestry plan for a village. The group itself consisted of people from different levels within the Forestry Commission. It was amazing how we progressed towards a participatory plan. I was assisted by Francis Chirunga and Peter of Silveira House, who brought in a lot of richness to the programme by demonstrating various behavioural exercises. It was also great to meet up and work with Saiti Makuku.

The usual species recommended by the Forestry Commission is Eucalyptus (as in India, and for similar reasons), mainly due to lobbies for Eucalyptus plantations from industrialists and tobacco farmers, their good survival rates and the fact that cattle don't eat them. However, the women listed over 300 trees. We could not rank all of them, but an attempt was made to rank and score as many as we could.

The matrix ranking exercise, which was laid out on the floor was probably one of the largest matrices in the history of PRA! Apart from its size, it was unique in the way that the women added on classifications for each species which indicated the method of propagation, the best location for planting and quantities required. This PRA has really become a language.

Three mapping exercises were run simultaneously - one by children (who did a census of the village in half an hour), one by women and another by youths (both groups made a resource map, and also showed details of the households and homesteads).

On the subject of mapping, a new discovery in Zimbabwe was the African equivalent of Rangoli. These are floor oxides which are easily available in different colours and fairly cheap. The women loved using them. We used the same medium in South Africa.

South Africa

In South Africa the programme was initiated by Noel Oettle and his wife Tessa Cousins, and located in Stoefelton, a black 'homeland' in Kwazulu. The notable elements of this programme were:

- The extremely good preparation for the programme from the point of view of the choice of location and participants. Tessa and Noel told me that they had received something like 30 applications a day for the programme, from the time it was announced. We had initially planned to have 20 participants on the course but it eventually rose to 30.

  Noel and Tessa were strict about screening the participants and in the end we had a good mix of blacks and whites, men and women (in fact more women than men for the first time in my experience) and professionals from different backgrounds - NGOs, universities, the South African Government, the ANC, the Church and so on. A thoroughly enjoyable group who were so keen to learn.

- Initially the theme for the Stoefelton exercises was planning a clinic. However, by the end of the course, the group had identified additional problems: health and drinking water, as well as education, livestock management, fodder and fuel, agriculture and soil erosion. The people wanted skills training and vocational guidance for the youth. They also wanted off-farm activities. Plans for all these activities were worked out with the people.

- Throughout the PRA, the mapping (both social and resource) emerged as powerful core exercises around which matrix ranking, seasonality, Venn diagramming etc. were supplementary satellite exercises. I think this is a useful framework in which to work with PRA and explain it to participants. On each day we built on the work done the day before, ie., using the same map or seasonality diagram to continue to add on information, triangulate and so on. We found that this was a good way of sequencing discussions and exercises. It also helped considerably in terms of initial warm up, starting with information that the villagers were already familiar with, having themselves been the authors of it on the previous day.

Conclusion

In respect of future training programmes I would like to make three points. Firstly, the client organisations should make a serious effort to 'vet' the participants, as was done by AFFRA and MIDNET in South Africa. Selecting participants is worth taking trouble over as it minimises the impact of training particularly at a time when the demand for training is far outstripping the supply. Thus I think we should aim for 'training of trainers' kinds of programmes.

Secondly the exercises themselves should be conducted for real. This I would insist on, because PRA, being the powerful tool that it is, will generate information, needs and expectations. What do we do then? Why are we doing this PRA at all? I see an eagerness in individuals and organisations to do PRAs, but when information is generated which should lead to development action, everyone backs away! This aspect needs to be addressed otherwise we run the risk of promoting 'extraction'.

Finally there is the issue of community organisation. PRA by itself cannot stand. It has to be followed through with action. For that action to lead to a development process, a consistent engagement of development agencies with rural communities is needed. For the process to be managed and sustained, and become self-reliant, not only do local initiatives need to be generated and encouraged, but also local institutions need to be promoted and helped to develop into viable organisations. I am firmly convinced about this, and would like to place this question before all readers:

How do we use PRA as an instrument to bring about greater change?

I think the moment has arrived - we have a great opportunity, which I'm afraid if missed may never come again.

Nonetheless, every time I am amazed at the miracle of transformation that takes place in terms of 'participant flip'! The other miracle that always takes place is the one of villager participation. We've done so many of these PRA field exercises - and in varied locations and conditions too. Every time I do one, there is a small voice in the back of my head asking: *"Are villagers going to participate? Is it going to work this time? Am I going to be able to demonstrate the methods to these participants?"*. And every time the same miracle takes place. Not only do the villagers participate, but they actually take over.

In my last PRA in Zimbabwe, I had the rare spectacle of the interviewers (Forestry Commission staff) reading newspapers and baby-sitting for the interviewees, a group of farm women, while they did resource mapping, matrix ranking and seasonality exercises in connection with a forestry plan. They knew what they wanted and told us so. One of the Forestry Commission staff who was with us remarked that in 30 years of extension work he had never experienced anything like this!

12. MAKING A DIFFERENCE: INTEGRATING GENDER ANALYSIS INTO PRA TRAINING

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Introduction

As the most basic tenet of PRA is the need for 'full community participation' in development, it would appear to follow that community diversity is explored rigorously and without questioning. Yet the reality of much PRA fieldwork bears witness to a marked lack of understanding about gender[1] as an important axis of such social diversity. Typically the diagrams that result from a specific discussion will bear a caption such as: "*Village Resource Map, drawn by the villagers of ...*". Only in very rare cases will these 'villagers' fully represent the diversity of gender, age, class, religion, ethnicity differences of the community in question. Similarly, reports contain statements such as "*Farmers mobilised in planning and layout of erosion measures*" or "*The community needs more agricultural credit facilities*". Who are these 'farmers', and who does - and does not - subscribe to this 'community need'?

Experiences to date clearly show that PRA is *not* automatically gender-sensitive. The few cases of gender-sensitive participatory development can usually be attributed to the personal commitment of those facilitating the process, rather than to the methodology itself. Those using PRA in the field carry with them personal biases, experiences and agendas, all of which shape the final analysis. Therefore, without a gender-conscious trainer or gender-sensitive trainees, gender issues are not likely to be raised during any subsequent use of PRA by those who have been trained. Moreover, many PRA practitioners continue to think that gender-sensitivity just means consulting women, as well as men. Few have a deeper understanding of what gender means, how it is manifested and how it affects individual development options. Any value which might arise from equal consultation of women and men in a PRA process is lost when the findings disappear into the melting pot of community averages, obscuring any possible gender differences.

PRA Training and Gender Training

PRA training generally focuses on the principles and practice of an integrated and participatory development process. Concepts that will be explored in most PRA training sessions will include participation, local livelihoods, problems and opportunities. Others often included are sustainability, systems thinking and farmer participatory research. The concepts used will vary, depending on the interests and background of the trainer, the interests of the participants and organisations they represent, and the focus of the fieldwork. The training approach usually includes some theoretical presentations, but focuses on communication skills and specific methods, through exercises, games and group discussions. The overall objective of PRA training is to encourage trainees to develop a more open and less directive communication style, devolving analytical and decision-making power to local people. In most field-based PRA training sessions there are three clear stages:

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[1] Gender is understood to mean the socially determined differences between women and men, as opposed to the word "sex" which denotes physical differences. Gender differences are historically-determined, culturally specific and dynamic. They define how in a specific context, women and men interact, and what is considered appropriate for women and men to do, thus determining their development options and constraints.

1. *Preparation and Practice* - during which conceptual issues are discussed (including the principles of PRA), specific methods are practised, and preparations made for the fieldwork;

2. *Fieldwork* - during which the methods are used to generate a community-level discussion about local problems and opportunities;

3. *Feedback and Evaluation* - after the fieldwork, finishing off the documentation of the process, reflecting on lessons learnt and future use of PRA, and evaluation of the training.

Reflection is part and parcel of each stage: reflection after the classroom-based practice sessions, reflections on the process and content of each day of fieldwork, reflection on the future use of PRA. Experiences have shown that these three stages are essential for a well-balanced perception by the trainees of the potential and limitations of PRA.

For PRA training which focuses on rural development and agriculture, Phase I commonly deals with concepts such as livelihoods, farming systems, sustainability, and participation. Yet rarely is the question of *whose* livelihood, *whose* farming system, *whose* perception of sustainability, and *who* participates, discussed sufficiently. Many trainers mention once or twice that "*Of course it is important to remember that not all people think the same*". But the issue of social differences based on gender is rarely explored with rigour throughout the training process.

By comparison, the overall objective of gender training is to raise awareness on what gender is and is not, what personal perceptions trainees hold of gender differences, how gender differences manifest themselves at the local level, and how this influences personal development. The concepts common to much gender training include:

- gender relations of power (Krishnamurthy, 1993);
- triple gender roles: productive, reproductive and community-managing activities carried out by women and men (Moser, 1989);
- position and condition of women, and related practical and strategic gender needs and interests (Molyneux, 1985);
- access to and control over resources (Overholt et al, 1985).

Gender training usually comprises theoretical readings, case study analysis, personal reflections, and simulation exercises.

Over the last two years there has been a slow growth in the number of attempts to improve the practice of PRA by allowing gender issues to shape both the practical work and the analysis (Welbourn, 1991, 1992; Guijt, 1993, 1994; Thomas Slayter et al, 1991,1993; Shah, 1993; Cousins et al, 1993). In December 1993 about 60 people attended a PRA and Gender workshop organised by IIED and the Institute for Development Studies[2]. The range of experiences show that the combination of PRA and gender has been used in:

- training: to sensitise fieldworkers on gender as one form of social difference;
- research: to conduct gender-differentiated analysis;
- community development: to strive for gender-balanced development and/or support the empowerment of women.

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[2] Information about the presentations and discussions can be obtained from the Sustainable Agriculture Programme at IIED.

In the training context, introducing gender as an analytical concept has encouraged a clearer appreciation by trainees of the relative marginalisation of most women. This limits the danger of fieldworkers falling into the trap of the community average, which assumes harmony and consistency of perspectives within the community. However, there is little thorough documentation on how gender and PRA can be integrated systematically into a training programme. It is essential that gender is part of each stage. Simply dropping a definition of gender on a hand-out and saying "Remember that this is important" is not enough to guarantee a clear understanding of what gender means in concrete terms.

The implications of integrating gender into a training session will include introducing specific concepts early on, and continual reflection about the relevance of these specific concepts at each stage of the training. The fieldwork stage of training is an essential step in the learning process of trainees, when ideas about PRA are consolidated and new working habits take shape. If gender is to become a concrete and meaningful concept for PRA trainees, then those who are learning to work with PRA will need to become aware of gender before any fieldwork takes place. The fieldwork can then clarify and strengthen their conceptual understanding.

A Brazilian Example of PRA and Gender Training

A gender-sensitive PRA goes much further than simply involving women in the fieldwork. It uses concepts such as the triple gender roles, gender relations, and practical and strategic gender needs to understand the local analysis that takes place during a PRA. One example of how, in a training context, gender was integrated with PRA, comes from recent work in southern Brazil (Guijt, 1994). The training was attended by 12 participants and had two overall objectives:

1. To strengthen their participatory work with a theoretical and practical understanding of PRA

2. To explore the relevance of gender with fieldworkers working with sustainable agriculture NGOs.

In the classroom-based discussions and during the fieldwork, a series of steps were followed in order to develop a gender-sensitive understanding of the rural community in which the fieldwork was taking place.

Classroom-Based Preparations

The classroom-based preparations included three steps in which gender-specific issues were addressed. First, a sequence of exercises and discussions were carried out by the participants to help them define gender and to draw out a conceptual understanding of gender-differentiated rural livelihoods. At this stage, analytical concepts such as productive and reproductive activities, and practical and strategic gender needs were introduced. After each PRA exercise practised in the classroom, the potential relevance of the method for understanding gender issues was discussed.

Second, during the preparations for the fieldwork, the participants specified their initial checklist by formulating key questions in terms of gender-differentiated perspectives. For example, they explored "who uses which resources and why", and not simply "use of resources".

Finally, the participants identified which methods would be most appropriate to explore each question and determined whether they would apply each method with separate groups of women and men, or only with men or only with women. Discussions had been held before the training started, with both the men and the women of the community, about their willingness to work together with the teams

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during the PRA fieldwork. Convenient times for meeting with women and men had been established on which the trainees based their preparations.

Fieldwork

During the fieldwork, several other stages followed to generate site-specific information about the abstract notions that were explored in the classroom. First, the teams used different methods with separate groups of women and men, during which they probed explicitly for gender issues and local problems and opportunities. This was not always easy. Direct questions, such as "who decides about expenditure", tended to provoke heated discussions and initial suspicion of motives of the trainees. One lesson learnt by the trainees was that exploration of gender issues requires sensitive communication skills. Each evening the teams shared:

- the problems raised by the local community, differentiated by gender. They also identified gender issues, such as "women are more sick than men" and "women participate less in meetings of the community association than men", "men had more understanding of agricultural marketing links than women". These were identified from the discussions held and the diagrams made.

- *who* in the community had raised each issue (only men, only women, both, only a particular group of men/women/both, etc), or if it was raised by one of the team members;

- analysis of problems, why they were raised, how they were raised (directly or indirectly, with ease or with difficulty), and whether these represented shared opinions or only those of the vocal majority.

Classroom-Based Reflection on Fieldwork

After the fieldwork, the lessons learnt and issues explored were consolidated. This was done in several ways:

- reflection on key questions about the links between gender and the environment;

- discussion about gender issues raised locally;

- revisiting the key gender analysis concepts, such as productive and reproductive activities, and practical and strategic gender needs, in the light of the common experience of the fieldwork;

- discussion of the implications that the gender-differentiated understanding of local livelihoods brings to project planning by reviewing several ongoing interventions in the light of their emphasis on 'productive or reproductive activities' and what they meant for 'practical' or 'strategic' gender interests. For example, the medicinal plant project coordinated by the NGO only involved women and reinforced women's reproductive role by making it easier for them to care for sick family members. Yet it was able to address both women's practical and strategic needs by meeting their immediate need for free medicine, and strengthening women's networking in the community and their understanding of health rights.

This example shows only one approach to mainstreaming gender into PRA. How this is carried out will depend on the trainer's understanding of PRA and of gender, the background of the trainees, the cultural context and the time allocated for training.

Reaping the Benefits... and Seeing the Dangers

The usual arguments that are used to justify the need to integrate gender into any planning process also hold for PRA. Equitable impact of development is enhanced by putting the views, areas of knowledge, and strategies of women back into the picture. It can help to recognise possible conflicts, complementarities or coincidences in interests between women and men (Rocheleau, 1990). Understanding these issues have important implications for planning, which can build on any complementarities and try to avoid conflict. Efficiency and appropriateness of subsequent action is likely to be enhanced if 'full community participation' is genuine.

Another benefit that PRA offers is the opportunity to use field-based training as a non-threatening approach to gender-awareness training. Seeing and listening is believing for those who do not know the very real significance of gender differences at the local level. As Welbourn (1991) writes, fieldworkers learn:

> *"to recognise that communities are not homogenous, passive blobs...[and] that those in the village who attend meetings are in fact normally those who expect to gain most from our assistance...".*

She presented gender to the trainees alongside age, material well-being and ethnicity as a package of "axes of difference", thereby defusing any fear of rampant feminism that is so often associated with gender training. She says that:

> *"fieldworkers were able to see for themselves that differences do exist within communities... and that to omit any one factor .. is to limit our understanding of that community's needs".*

By exposing trainees to the gender-differentiated versions of reality that a gender-sensitive PRA can generate, gender becomes more meaningful than if they had just read a theoretical text on the issue (Mukherjee, 1993). Experiential learning might well be a more effective approach to gender training, than one which rests on dry, intellectual understanding.

While it is essential that gender is taken more seriously in the context of PRA, a few reservations should be mentioned. It is just as easy to fall into the trap of the 'gender average' (assuming harmony and homogeneity amongst women or amongst men) as that of a 'community average'. Gender differences should, therefore, be considered together with other aspects of social difference. Local understanding of gender, and gender differences, should be explored. This can be done, for example, by looking at gender issues within local proverbs, songs and stories (ACORD, 1993). Gender differences should perhaps not be presumed to be significant in all situations for everyone (Cornwall, 1992). The interaction between various aspects of difference needs further exploration. Perhaps in some settings, being a woman might not be as significant as being of a particular ethnic group. The most fundamental challenge is raised about our personal notions of gender. Cornwall (1992) says that:

> *"Our ideas about gender - whether they are those of the sexist patriarch or the committed feminist- are biases. It is important that we suspend judgement and facilitate local people in offering us their versions, their experiences and their analyses of difference rather than wading in with our own agendas."*

Nonetheless, these reflections on the limitations of enshrining gender as an analytical concept and an organising principle should not be seen as a way out of discussing gender altogether. The danger of imposing an ethnocentric (ie. Northern) understanding of gender on other cultures is often used as

an excuse used to avoid addressing gender and to continue in what is generally a male-biased approach. Cultural sensitivity never seems to be a difficult issue where other socio-economic differences, such as class or ethnicity, are concerned. For example, few are worried about upsetting the 'haves' through income-generation activities aimed at indebted clients. Conversely, many are not averse to strengthening the position of the 'haves' through their interventions.

Gender Relations at the Community Level

Making development workers more gender-sensitive is one thing, but dealing with gender issues *at the community level by community members* is something else altogether. The first might lead to more gender-balanced development in the sense of not marginalising women and implementation of appropriate projects. But adopting a participatory approach to challenge and change power relations between women and men is quite another area (Krishnamurthy, 1993), and one which is poorly documented. Meena Bilgi writes an intriguing account of how she was able to overcome the initial resistance of local men to initiating labour-saving projects for women by using PRA (Bilgi, 1992).

How best could PRA be an effective approach for discussing gender issues at the local level, and identifying (and possibly resolving) inherent or emergent conflicts in the process? This might entail a confrontation between local women and men about issues of power and autonomy. Before embarking on such a venture, it is essential to consider *why* such a confrontation is considered necessary and what the expected impact might be. Without careful consideration of this question, and the capacity and willingness to deal with the follow-up, the entire process might be counter-productive and disempower those who are supposed to benefit from the process.

No two-or three-week training can overturn the thinking of a lifetime (Welbourn, 1991). Yet by not addressing issues of social difference, including gender, in the context of PRA in a serious and systematic manner, PRA training and subsequent practice may well serve to reinforce the thinking of a lifetime. I would greatly welcome hearing of other experiences about the pros and cons of integrating gender and participatory development in training.

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13. FROM PARTICIPATORY RHETORIC TO PARTICIPATORY REALITY: TRAINING FOR INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION

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Training and Institutional Change

For more than a decade, many institutions have promoted participatory approaches for research and development, and remained hopeful that these might be employed on a wide scale. Such sentiments are frequently included in the national plans produced by planning agencies, in the project appraisal reports of donor agencies, and by the heads of implementing agencies themselves. But this participatory rhetoric is rarely backed by more than the introduction of a few training courses or perhaps the addition of a new type of personnel (eg., social mobilisers). The results are often erratic and temporary as bureaucratic institutions try to embrace participatory approaches without changing their operational procedures and organisational culture.

To implement participatory approaches successfully, training in and of itself will have few direct or lasting impacts. It must be viewed as part of a broader process of institutional transformation. Only then can an agency make the transition from being a bureaucratic, top-down organisation to one that is more strategic, process-oriented, people-centred and enabling.

Making the Shift

To become less bureaucratic and more enabling, an agency must examine every aspect of its work and determine whether its programmes and procedures are capable of responding to the needs and priorities of local people. Does an agency's staff have any reason to care whether they are providing an effective service, and if so, whether it is valued by the people? Do participatory approaches for appraisal, analysis, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation result in the selection of viable projects, programmes and processes. Do internal structures and management systems support effective problem solving? Do existing budgetary procedures allow local adaptation and flexibility in investment and disbursement? If the answers to these questions are "yes", then there is a strong chance that the organisational procedures and institutional priorities of an agency will be flexible and open enough to allow the transformation process to begin.

Changing institutional priorities alone will not make this happen, however. Donor support often hinders the development and application of participatory approaches as much as bureaucratic procedures. The typical mode of investment and expenditure followed by most donor agencies continues to make it difficult for programmes to employ participatory approaches effectively. Their emphasis is on disbursing funds and showing measurable results quickly. By contrast, constructive dialogue, joint analysis, participatory planning - all of the elements of a participatory approach to development - run counter to this way of thinking. Instead of 'front-end loading' of capital investments and expenditures, there is a need for a more gradual release of funds only after a substantial period of consultation with and capacity strengthening of local groups and institutions. This means that the initial investments will often be quite small in terms of capital improvements, but significant in terms of human resources development, including training.

These and other conditions that determine whether a particular institution's programmes and policies can be effective at all - irrespective of whether 'participation' is involved - will need to be examined concurrently with efforts to introduce a new participatory approach to any research or development activity. The case of the Production Through Conservation Programme in Lesotho offers a useful case in point (Box 1). Each of these changes must constitute an integral part of the whole - all contributing to change involved in an organisational learning process in which errors are detected and embraced, alternative solutions examined and tested, adjustments are made and competing interests confronted and negotiated.

Box 1: Production Through Conservation Programme, Lesotho

The Production Through Conservation (PTC) Programme of the Ministry of Agriculture, Lesotho, which is actively working in three southern districts of the country, is promoting a Participatory Village Development Planning (PVDP) process as a basis for involving local people in the planning and implementation of resource management and agricultural development activities. The participatory village development plans help determine the annual work programme and budget for each District Agricultural Officer (Khatiwada, 1993).

The PTC grew out of an earlier programme that was decidedly top-down in its orientation. In contrast to that initiative, the PTC has already achieved a breakthrough in addressing rural farm families' needs. First, it has consulted directly with villagers, not just their representatives, in a spirit of enquiry, dialogue, and participation, to help reach objectives decided by local groups. Second, it has taken an interdisciplinary approach to respond to the multi-faceted problems raised by farm families. Third, the DAOs, with the support of Ministry headquarters, have begun reorganising their offices so as to facilitate the Programme's work, and placed strong emphasis on the training of staff in participatory appraisal approaches.

According to a recent evaluation mission (Shaxson and Sehlolo, 1993: 3): "*Only one of these alone, or any two in combination, could not have achieved the remarkable synergistic effect which has occurred as a result of all three being undertaken together. The entire process has been greatly facilitated by decentralisation of responsibilities to the DAO's office.*"

The Role of Training

Training is only one of many components that shape and influence the institutional learning process, albeit an important one. For it to have a lasting impact, training in participatory approaches must be part of a wider programme of human resource development. It will not only need to focus on preparing agency personnel to use certain innovative field methods, but also improve their communication and analytical skills.

It will encourage staff members to take increased responsibility for their own learning, and support the development of competencies such as adaptable, transferable skills. It will focus on learning 'how to learn' rather than absorbing facts (Bawden, 1989; Macadam and Packham, 1989; Ison, 1990). It will need to foster a relaxed and open environment in which staff from different levels in the institutional hierarchy feel comfortable and thus able to work together constructively. The experience of the Soil and Water Conservation Branch of the Ministry of Agriculture, Kenya, demonstrates this well (Box 2).

Box 2: Soil and Water Conservation Branch, Kenya

In the late 1980s, after nearly two decades of ineffective programmes, the Soil and Water Conservation Branch (SWCB) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock Development and Marketing (MALDM), Kenya, launched the Catchment (or Area of Concentration) Approach. This was an attempt to improve soil conservation coverage and gain greater local support for conservation initiatives. The objective of the Catchment Approach is to concentrate resources and efforts within a specified catchment (typically 200-500 hectares) for a specific period of time (generally one year), during which all farms are laid out and conserved. Small modifications and maintenance activities are then conducted by the community members themselves with the support of local extension agents.

Training has played a crucial role in the continuing transformation of the SWCB. Today, senior officers who were trained in the participatory methods and procedures in one or more of a series of national PRA workshops since 1989 are now training their own staff members to employ them in catchment analysis and planning. The Branch has produced detailed field reports of the work conducted in most of catchments in which it has initiated participatory planning. These reports are now used, together with slides of past field experiences, by the officers to train their own teams (Pretty, Thompson and Kiara, 1994).

The motivations that SWCB staff have brought to these changes vary considerably. Those initiating the process in 1989 brought a vision of a more people-oriented approach to soil and water conservation. As the program expanded, many of the soil conservation officers at the provisional, district, divisional and field levels supported it because they were concerned with quality work and saw the participatory approach as an improved means of reducing land degradation, conserving productive resources, and most importantly, collaborating with local people. After nearly five years of field tests, methodological adjustments, and national and local staff trainings, the Branch is now beginning to develop and institutionalise the capacities to use its participatory Catchment Approach on a broader scale. Thus new institutional norms and conventions have been created which emphasise interdisciplinary teamwork, interdepartmental collaboration, active farmer participation in all phases of catchment planning, thorough documentation of the process, and phased training of staff.

This process will mean concentrating on attitudes, behaviour, and principles, as well as key methodological concepts and techniques (Pretty and Chambers, 1993; Chambers, 1992). Finally, it will have to become a learning, as well as an enabling institution, remaining flexible and open to new ideas and new procedures, and adapting to ever-changing conditions.

Key Lessons

The examples from Lesotho and Kenya illustrate that it is possible to alter the operational procedures and institutional cultures of large, bureaucratic, public agencies. A second and equally important lesson is that such a transformation is neither easily nor quickly achieved. These cases also indicate that the transformation of these public agencies into strategic, enabling institutions requires:

- a policy framework supportive of a clear role for local people in development;

- strong leadership committed to the task of developing organisational systems, capacities and norms;

- long-term financial commitments and flexible funding policies from key donor agencies;

- careful attention to and patience in working out the details of systems and procedures - each involving careful analysis and the negotiation of competing interests and perceptions;

- creative management, so that improved practices and procedures, once developed, can be implemented effectively;

- an open, supportive, yet challenging organisational climate in which it is safe to experiment and safe to fail;

- a flexible, integrated, field-based training programme over a sustained period.

Clearly, institutionalising and operationalising participatory approaches is an extremely complex and problematic business. Change and stability are inextricably linked to any open management system; the challenge for large public institutions attempting to employ participatory approaches is to facilitate the emergence of new ways of knowing and behaving so as to manage change creatively. This will offset growing concerns over the co-opting of the term 'participatory' by those with short time horizons who may be promoting stasis and the status quo rather than change and evolution.

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14. SOME INSIGHTS INTO TRAINING FOR RAPID AND PARTICIPATORY APPRAISAL IN A NORTHERN SETTING

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Introduction

Training for PRA in a Northern setting is still not a very widespread practice. At the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), a parastatal institution for development cooperation with the South, we tried this approach. The aim was to help our staff gain insights into the theory and practice of Rapid and Participatory Rural Appraisal. With a group of 16 men and women currently working on bilateral development projects or at GTZ headquarters we went into an Austrian Alpine valley called the Grosses Walsertal. The trainers were ourselves, Irene Guijt of IIED and Timmy Tillmann of the University of Tübingen.

The training was intended to be a gradual process from a classroom type clarification of the concept and methodology of RRA and PRA to the practice of the methods in a real-life situation in two small valley communities. The main theme of the week was "Peasant Survival in the Grosses Walsertal". This area, like many other regions in the Alps, is undergoing rapid and substantial socio-economic changes due to infrastructure development, tourism and world market conditions.

Contact with the families in the two communities was established via a former GTZ-staff member. The openness, curiosity and support by the local population and authorities furthermore stemmed from the fact that two years before a short RRA training course was held in a neighbouring community and was still considered helpful by a number of people. The experience of the local people in 'handling' foreigners (mostly tourists) certainly contributed to the hospitality we enjoyed.

The six-day's training was not meant to qualify participants to facilitate RRAs and PRAs by themselves in the future. We tried to make clear that 'soft science' methods need as much professional know-how and experience as do other types of development work. Instead we intended to inform participants about the process, possibilities and limits of RRA/PRA (which have become 'trendy catchwords' in the development world).

We also wanted to give them a taste of the merits and pitfalls of real-life application and to discuss the potential of applying RRA/PRA in their daily project routine.

The training week was therefore divided as follows:

Day One	Setting the scene: introduction to Walsertal.
Day Two	Clarifying the context, principles and main methods of PRA/RRA (visualisation, communication, mind mapping).
Day Three	Practising RRA/PRA methods (transect walks, mapping, modelling and ranking), partially with elders in the community.
Day Four	Final methods practice, preparation of field phase (institutional diagramming, interviewing, dialoguing), 'rooming in' with the people and start of the field phase.
Day Five	Further talks at the kitchen table and community gathering in the evening (dialoguing, practice of visualisation tools, focus group discussions).
Day Six	Evaluation of the practical experience and the method; reflection on the use of RRA and PRA in GTZ's project work.

We believed that such a condensed form of training was possible and effective, because of the advantages of conducting training in this particular context, ie. being able to use one's own language, and working in a familiar physical and social environment.

It proved that this basic training approach was feasible and successful, although the main shortcoming was tight time schedule. By applying what they were learning, the trainees began to see that the inhabitants of the Grosses Walsertal were the experts on the endangered microcosm of the Alp economy, tourism development and social problems. At the same time, the methods apparently helped both parties, the local communities as well as the training participants, to see familiar problems from different viewpoints, and to discuss regional development perspectives in a larger group including local officials. The main indicator of success for us as trainers were the words of Walser families during the community gathering when discussing what they had gained from the interaction:

We experienced this group as people, who, without quick judgements, listened to us because they were seriously interested in us and our problems.

Furthermore, the training in the Walsertal gave us a lot of food for thought about the principles and practices of RRA/PRA, as well as training in these methods. Some of our learning insights are stated here in the form of 12 hypotheses which we present for discussion:

1. *RRA and PRA training-by-doing, or real-life application, is a particularly good form of learning transfer.*

The Walsertal experience showed that participants became highly involved in the training because of the 'taste of real life' which grew through interaction with Austrian farmers. Even though the training was highly demanding, at times even exhausting, the participants stayed motivated throughout. Highlights of the training were the overnight stay at farmers' homes and in the Alpine cottages, as well as the community gathering and discussion.

2. *RRA and PRA training-by-doing in Europe allows for the transfer of a number of critical insights from the First to the Third World and vice versa.*

Economic structures and social change, modernisation and marginalisation are processes which have similarities in widely differing countries. It was an important insight to see such processes - familiar to most training participants from their own project processes - in a picturesque Alpine valley. On a methodological level this implied that participatory planning and action can find their place in Walsertal as well as in Burkina Faso, and on a theoretical level this proved farmers' problems, concerns and survival strategies are as limited in Colombia as they are in Austria. It could be an important contribution to world development if such learning transfers were enhanced via RRA and PRA training.

3. *Experiencing RRA and PRA in one's own language intensifies learning insights, in contrast to the frequent situation in when participants can only follow a PRA training via a translator or through the filter of a foreign language.*

All participants were easily able to practice the use of basic RRA/PRA methods like dialoguing, walking transects, Venn diagramming or preference ranking because they could do it in German, their mother tongue. Even more important was the fact that all participants were able to communicate in their own language during the field phase. This supported the directness, richness and reliability of the communication and allowed for intensive interactions between the participants and the Walsers. Especially when a learning process has to take place in a short period of time and a rather condensed manner to quickly reach a high degree of personal impact and involvement, learning in one's own language is almost indispensable.

4. *The hands-on experience of practising methods - especially those involving visualisation and intensive interaction (ie, ranking procedures or Venn diagramming) - can be decisive for convincing a participant about RRA and PRA. This implies, however, that the practical, step-wise use of methods should first be intensively practised and reflected upon before the training group enters the field.*

A number of the participants became quite convinced about the value of RRA and PRA because they experienced it through real-life application and could see its merits. However this was mostly the case with regard to the methods which were used successfully. Training room practice and giving of feedback have to be provided for to make trainees feel self-confident and at ease with particular practices. The detailed steps and the sound know-how in handling methods such as ranking are quite complex.

5. *Sequencing of PRA/RRA techniques which is indispensable for real-life application, has to be given special attention when preparing the field phase.*

In classroom training sessions, the sequencing of different RRA/PRA methods can at best be explained by using case studies. When preparing for real-life application however, the trainees have to work with a special mix and sequence of techniques. Our experience suggests that special attention has to be given to this step when preparing the actual field phase.

6. *The complexity of a combination of classroom and real-life application training means that sufficient attention and guidance need to be paid to group processes between the trainees, especially before moving in to the field.*

A classroom-type training for practising methods is a many-dimensional learning process (content, self-experience, group dynamics etc.). However, complexity of the training process increases further through the combination of classroom and field application training. Additional dimensions are not only the interaction with men and women of the community, but also the very intensive team-building processes in subgroups before these trainee groups go into the field (clarification of common goals, approaches, rules, role assignments, sequencing etc.). Due to our, in this respect unsatisfying, experience we think it is essential to allow for sufficient time and guidance for these group processes, even when time constraints are tight. Otherwise it is likely that the trainees will start dealing with these neglected questions when working with the community in an often unconscious and potentially destructive way. This entails the risk of group discords spilling-over into the interaction with the community.

7. *PRA training-by-doing ideally necessitates a cohesive social group or community with an explicit interest in cooperation with the training group. Thus, such training tends to become an entry into action research.*

It seems that most training workshops are still more RRA than PRA-oriented, meaning that they tend to be a means of information collection by an outside 'expert' group rather than the stimulation of self-analysis within a local group. In our case this was almost unavoidable since we had differing contacts with only a limited number of households in two Alpine communities. The ideal case would be a clearly defined social group with an interest in interacting with the training group. This would, however, imply that a local population had a certain topic, problem or concern to deal with, thus leading a training group quickly into action research. The community gathering at the end of the field phase came closest to this, as it was organised in a way to facilitate community participation in a self-analysis process.

8. *If a PRA training does turn into action research, the ethical issue as to how far a follow-up of the processes initiated can be guaranteed, immediately comes up.*

While an action research orientation would, from many viewpoints, be a very rewarding training situation for PRA, it would have to be clarified how the continuation and follow-up activities can be assured by the parties concerned. For most trainees or trainers it will not be possible to engage in continuing interaction processes with the respective communities. Therefore a collaboration with an intermediary organisation (often needed to establish contacts in the beginning), willing and able to continue the initiated process, should be aimed at and agreed upon in advance. If no further cooperation were possible, such an approach should not be chosen on the ground of the ethical dilemma involved.

9. *Minimum requirements for a PRA training as action research therefore are:*

- *seeking the explicit general agreement of the community and a possible partner organisation in cooperation with a group of trainees and trainers, and discussing the necessary arrangements in advance;*

- *clarification of the intentions, the potential focus and content of the training among all parties concerned, most practically by means of a community/group evening at the beginning of the training; and*

- *reflection of the local power structure, the choice of the local partner, and the implications of this choice.*

Social settings are never without power struggles between individuals or groups with different interests and socio-economic positions. This should also not be forgotten in a training situation. The choice of cooperation with one group might be an offence against another group. Whatever the situation, it is advisable to plan for a community gathering not only towards the end of a PRA training, but also at the beginning in order to clarify expectations, interests and issues.

10. *A training-by-doing exercise in PRA with a strong action research orientation has a potential danger: the pressure on the participants to get involved in the contents can become too overwhelming to guarantee sound methodological learning insights.*

A strong topical focus in a training - as will invariably be the case with a "PRA = action research" approach - tends to lead participants' attention more towards content issues than towards methodological problems and concerns. It has to be ensured that enough methodological reflection is provided for in every training of this kind, and that ways can be found to protect participants from too much involvement - at least during the training.

11. *The training should constantly allow participants to consider how PRA/RRA techniques can be applied in their own working environment. This intensifies learning and at the same time provides a convincing guiding theme for every participant.*

In our Walsertal training we only reflected on the practical use of PRA and RRA in participants' project work on the last day. It seems wiser to include this topic from the very first day, when principles of RRA and PRA are introduced.

12. *The theoretical basis for RRA and PRA is not yet developed enough to clarify it to trainees: apparently we need to work more on the links between practical PRA insights and social theory, especially with a focus on actor-oriented approaches.*

The final issue evolving from our seminar is one with a more challenging perspective. We saw in the first days of our training that the rationale for, and the set of principles of, PRA need a stronger theoretical underpinning. We should make theories from the social sciences clearer to trainees to discourage them from using PRA only as one further 'tool kit' to repair some problems in development or to 'do participation' at one single point in project history. PRA rests on the assumption that development cooperation interacts with fully-fledged social systems; that these systems consist of social actors who construct meanings via culture; who create different knowledge systems; who struggle over meanings and legitimation orders via discourses, power relations, and development projects. Becoming involved in these interactions, in these discourses, and these struggles via participatory methods means becoming deeply involved indeed.

15. PRA TRAINING WORKSHOPS: FOLLOW UP ISSUES FROM UGANDA AND ETHIOPIA

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In late 1992, John Devavaram of SPEECH and I facilitated a PRA field-based training workshop in Uganda with the support of the Forest, Trees and People Programme (FTPP) and with the coordination of John Aluma of the Makerere Institute of Social Research (MISR). This note summarises what was achieved after this workshop. The follow up workshop was attended by almost all the participants who had attended the first PRA workshop. The progress that had been made in six months was very encouraging. Almost all the participants have used PRA methods in their work for a wide range of applications.

There have been a number of training programmes conducted by NGOs such as ACCORD and FORUD. In addition a number of short orientation programmes have been organised by MISR for government ministers and senior bureaucrats. Some programmes involved training and orientation of Resistance Committees (RCs) at three and four levels. One of the districts has also organised a workshop for its officials. The Ministry of the Environment is keen to organise a workshop for senior level forestry officials at the district level. In short, the participants have tried to gain more experience as trainers and there are a number of new potential training opportunities in Forestry as well as the development sector in general.

On the research front, the team from Makerere University has tried out a number of participatory methods in their existing research programmes. They have also used these methods in the first stage of the research programmes funded by FTPP. They are aware of the problems faced and are trying to find approaches to overcome them. They hope to include aspects of PRA in the students' work, and may also incorporate them into the curriculum.

One aspect of PRA which has proved difficult to imbibe is self-critical awareness, as this is related to the performance evaluation mechanisms in these organisations. Criticising oneself can be taken as a sign of weakness, but this is inhibiting growth in learning through analysis and reflection.

Sharing of experiences through attending one another's training programmes is also not happening to the extent necessary to develop a functional network, although there have been some exchanges where the existing budgetary provisions in the project allowed it. Sharing of material also needs to be streamlined - there is no defined responsibility or budgetary provision for photocopying or posting of these documents to different members in Uganda.

Issues for Future Follow up and Networking in Uganda

The participants discussed the future role of the network in the next three years and the support required if this role is to be achieved. As a result of this discussion, and including my own impressions, the following recommendations were made:

Organisation of Workshops

- Organisation of a second national workshop for a second group of trainers made up of foresters (UNDP funds available), government district administrators, other academic institutions and NGOs. This could be facilitated by the participants of the first training programme and would help to expand both the pool of trainers and the scope of PRA, and thus aid in broadening the existing network. It would also create a better environment for using participatory methods in the planning of district programmes. However the creation of local training materials and audio visual aids would have to precede the organisation of the training programme.

- Organisation of regional workshops in selected regions with a mixed group of officials from government departments, local politicians (RCs), NGOs, extension staff and other local institutions like churches and schools. These would help to integrate efforts and develop mixed teams at a regional level. It was felt that this should concentrate on the regions and districts (12) which have recently been decentralised. In the long run, this will assist with the setting-up of regional networks which might be more effective.

- Facilitate exchange visits within Uganda so that the trainers can gain knowledge of different regions and develop more intensive and qualitative experience. In addition, exchange visits could be arranged for key trainers to go further afield - to East Africa or India - to gain experience from other regions of the world.

Production and Dissemination of Training Materials

- Sponsor training of some members in editorial and documentation skills to enable production of good quality training material and research papers.

- Production of training materials and training manuals specific to Uganda, and the development of audio visual material for this purpose. A committee has been set up to accomplish this and will first work out the production of the manual based on the exercises done in the first workshop.

- Set up a Resource Centre at Makerere University with photocopier, computer and training equipment such as overhead projector, slide projector and eventually video recording. This would become a resource centre for institutions organising training programmes.

- Serve as a dissemination centre for all FTPP and other publications to the institutional members.

Encouraging Wider Use of PRA

- Help members and others to develop research proposals incorporating participatory methods for other donors and the FTPP.

All the suggestions made by the participants are interesting and merit attention. Some of them are important in the short run, while some could be taken up on a long term basis. However, some suggestions have higher financial implications than others, and thus would require external support. For some of them, finances could be mobilised from the existing resources of the institutions.

Ethiopia

A PRA workshop for participants from the Ministry of Natural Resources (national, regional and district levels), Almaye University, the Soil and Water Conservation Research Centre and FARM Africa (an NGO) was organised at Nazreth from the 21st to 29th May 1993. The workshop exposed the participants to PRA methods for involving communities in preparing a village resources plan.

However, since about half of the participants did not have the capacity to become trainers (they were very inexperienced and had been selected by virtue of their never having attended a training programme before), the objective of developing training capacity among existing trainers has not been achieved significantly.

Following the field-based training, the participants made suggestions for the follow up action needed by each organisation. It is very important in training workshops to leave sufficient time for the thorough development of these action plans. The following suggestions were made.

Ministry of Natural Resources

- Use seminars to inform Ministry bosses about what they had learnt, and the use of PRA in their activities.
- Incorporate PRA into their present work and train field workers and their extension staff in community forestry and soil and water conservation.
- Prepare development plans jointly with communities in future and seek finances for them.
- Ensure that the development plans prepared by the communities in the two field exercise villages, Shakla Fabrika and Olda Dama are followed up and implemented through an action programme. In addition they would also take a similar approach for development planning in one of the remote villages in a different province.

Research Organisations

- Organise training programmes in order to change the attitudes of experts.
- Review existing methodologies being tried out for participatory research in Ethiopia and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses through a research project.

Almaye University

- Revise the project proposal submitted to FTPP incorporating the participatory methodologies learnt during the workshop.
- Organise a training programme for other researchers at the University.

- Integrate PRA into the research and training activities of the Farming Systems Research (FSR) Division in the University.

- Develop training material for teaching and other training activities and disseminate this material to organisations willing to use it.

- Organise similar training programmes for the officials of the Ministry of Agriculture.

FARM Africa

- Use PRA for development planning in three new projects being initiated this year.

- Develop methods to enable farmers to conduct their own research.

Short-term Follow up

Action was also decided for the short-term. This included organising a follow up workshop in the next six months for those participants who have used PRA (after ascertaining their performance through a pre-workshop survey). It was also decided that the field exercises from the first training programme could be written up by a steering committee composed of participants. This would serve as a manual for future participants, and could be coordinated and published by the Ministry of Natural Resources.

16. PARTICIPATORY RURAL APPRAISAL IN A WOMEN'S HEALTH EDUCATION PROJECT IN BANGLADESH

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Background

The Women's Development Project (WDP) of CARE-Bangladesh is a health education project currently working in 441 Bangladeshi villages. WDP trains village women who have been nominated by their neighbours as local health educators. Women are proposed on the basis of their good relations with community members, leadership capabilities, enthusiasm, and availability of time. The volunteer community health workers are called *para* committee members, the word *para* meaning 'neighbourhood' in Bangla.

Once selected the women participate in intensive residential training held away from their villages. They attend two three-day sessions in the first year, sessions where they are introduced to the WDP interventions using participatory training techniques. Residential training is followed up and reinforced by fortnightly meetings held between WDP field staff and the *para* committee members.

Community health education sessions are held in each *para* on a monthly basis. Initially these are facilitated by CARE staff but from the second year on, the *para* committee members begin to conduct these sessions.

The *para* committees also take on responsibility for transmitting health messages to between five and 15 nearby households. They provide information on family planning, control of diarrhoeal disease, the importance of environmental and personal sanitation, the value of nutritious meals, and the importance of appropriate breast-feeding and weaning practices.

WDP works in each village for four years. By that time, the para committee members are well-known features of the community, and have a good deal of knowledge about basic health, nutrition and hygiene.

Why do Mapping?

We were prompted to use mapping methods, having attended a short workshop in Dhaka. It seemed to us that there were a number of ways in which the PRA methods could be useful in the WDP. Our initial idea had been to use mapping to enable *para* committee members to assess their achievements over a period of time, and plan their work for the future, but the exercise described below was really seen more as an opportunity to explore the range of possible applications of mapping.

The mapping took place on December 27, 1992 in Ghunikesar village, Delduar Thana, Tangail district (one month after the initial workshop). This village has been involved in WDP since July 1990. Therefore, the *para* committees had been working with WDP for 2½ years. Four project staff (two from Dhaka and two who work regularly with these villagers) participated in the exercise. Thirteen

of the 15 para committee members attended, as well as two members of the savings and loan groups that WDP also works with in the village. The mapping took place in a large courtyard between two houses. Although almost all of the women could sign their names, only one was literate.

After everyone had introduced themselves, we told the women that we were would like them to draw a map of their village. To do so, the women formed into three *para* groups. We suggested they draw the map on the ground, using sticks and flour. The women began their maps quickly. Some asked what they should draw and we suggested they show all of the households[1] in the para and other landmarks. That was about all the guidance they needed.

Within 30 minutes each group had produced a map showing all the houses and landmarks (schools, latrines, tubewells, canals, roads, groves etc.). They stuck branches in the ground to indicate particular trees which serve as landmarks, and a flower in a small medicine container to indicate a flowering bush in someone's courtyard. As the map was created, the participants debated amongst themselves about the placement or existence of different features. Based on our prior knowledge of the village, we believe that the map was extremely accurate. All the maps were different (some showed houses as circles, others as squares) but each was very clear:

Some asked if they should show the people who live in the houses, and we suggested that this was a good idea. *Dal* (lentils) which we had brought along were used for this purpose, with each lentil representing one resident. Within 20 minutes, they had indicated men and women, children and adults. This is certainly the fastest way to gather demographic information in a village. We then asked women if they could identify their houses, which they did with red powder. They then identified with orange powder the houses they each worked with. This latter information was cross-checked and found to be accurate.

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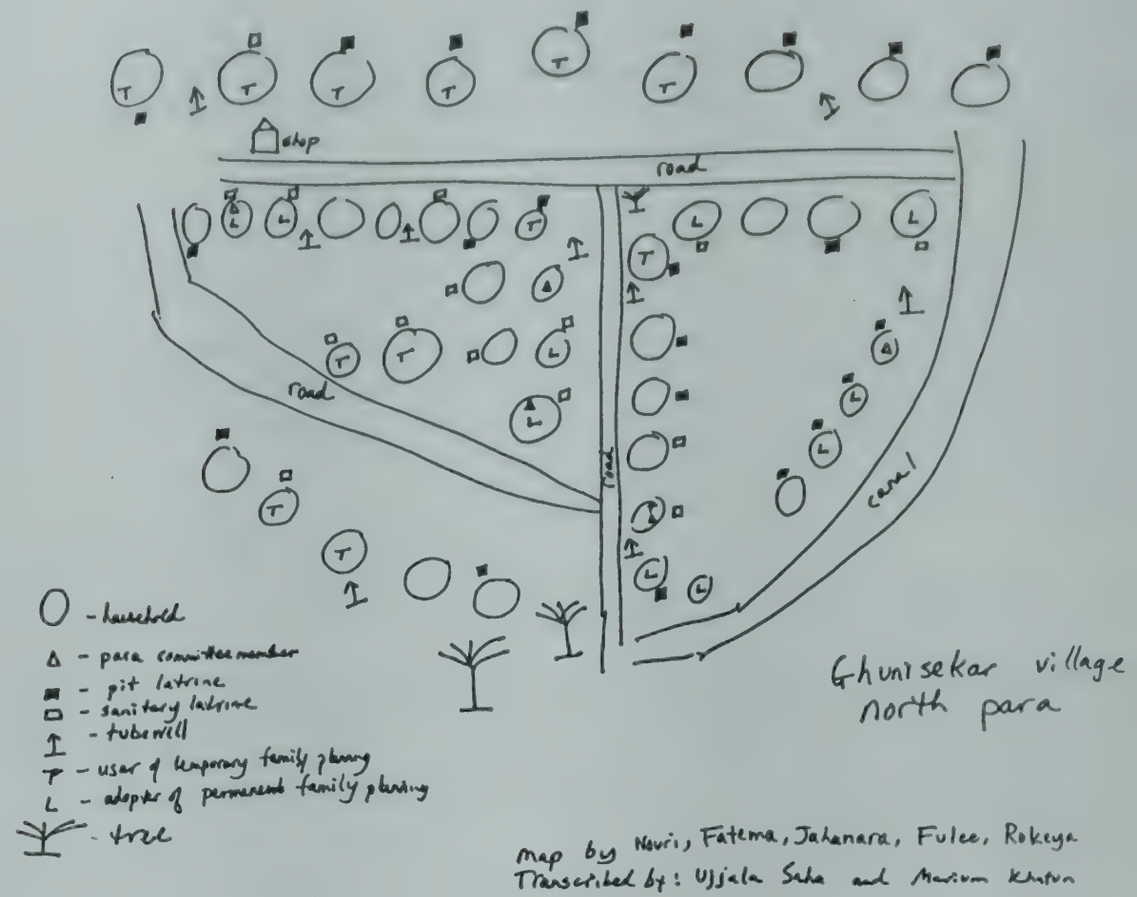
[1]The women understood amongst themselves that a household referred to a group of people using the same *chula* or stove.

Figure 1. Maps Transcribed onto Paper



We then asked the women what they had done as *para* committee members, and they began listing the following:

- promoting family planning;
- promoting litigations;
- promoting the installation of latrines;
- helping families understand the importance of nutritious food;
- promoting the use of colostrum for newborn babies;
- helping malnourished children become well-nourished;
- treating children with night-blindness.

We suggested that they show these things on the map, and offered various types of *dal* and beans for them to use to indicate the households where they had been active. They indicated only those achievements they felt partly responsible for, excluding therefore, latrines that had been installed before WDP began working with the *para* committee members. We hadn't brought enough different types of beans, so we used material available at the site such as flower petals, leaves and bits of straw.

When we asked the women if they wanted to show those households where mothers had been motivated to give colostrum, they said that all new mothers now did this, so they did not feel it was necessary to show this on the map. The two Tangail-based staff recorded each of the three maps on paper (See Figure 1). After they had finished their own maps, the participants took quite an active role in this, checking the accuracy of what had been recorded. Note that the maps done by the women were in fact much more elaborate than the paper versions shown here. It was important to transcribe the map quickly - after we'd sat down to discuss the experience, the chickens and dogs of the village started to eat up the flour and lentils.

The total time spent in mapping was two hours, followed by a discussion.

Participants' Perceptions

The women described the experience as very enjoyable. They obviously had a good time doing the map together, and felt both challenged and proud of their work. When one participant began to say that we (the outsiders) had taught them to do this, another interrupted her saying:

"No, they didn't teach us, we used our brain"

Although one or two older men looked on, they did not actively participate in the exercise, remaining observers. Most of the men were busy in the fields harvesting rice. The women liked the experience because the map offered a way to visualise their achievements as *para* committee members. Though they knew beforehand that they could draw the maps, they had never done so. They know that their work has had an impact - for example they cited the reduced incidence of diarrhoea in the village. However, they had never in this way depicted what they had accomplished in each of the houses, and for each intervention, and recognised that looking at the beans and leaves in each, they had achieved a lot. At the same time, they felt that by looking at the maps they could see the need in the future to put more emphasis on family planing. Visualising the situation on a house-to-house basis, they felt they could identify what is needed in each house.

Future Plans

The most immediate application of mapping appears to be the one mentioned by the participants: to enable *para* committee members to review their accomplishments and plan work for the future. Many of the project staff had felt that the women would not be able to create such maps. We ourselves have difficulty making maps of our neighbourhoods, and people were concerned that lack of literacy skills would pose a problem. Therefore the success of the exercise both shattered a myth they had held about *para* committee members and convinced them of the value of the process.

We are concerned about how we can extend the use of this mapping process to a large number of villages (we now have 441 villages and over 250 staff) while maintaining quality and flexibility in the process. Our initial plan is to continue to do demonstration exercises in each of the four areas where we work, taking two or three staff with us to observe and transcribe maps, and following the exercise with a discussion of the processes in the office with more of the field staff. We will develop guidelines, but they will probably focus more on the 'don'ts' than the 'dos'. Avoiding rigidity will be our biggest challenge.

Also, we need to explore how the very useful information generated during mapping sessions can be effectively communicated to management, while maintaining the flexibility of the process. Can we standardise the information collected without making the process mechanical?

Applications for Mapping in WDP

Potential uses of participatory mapping include:

- for CARE to select villages in which to work, based on a comparison of available resources and local problems/issues in a selection of villages;
- when WDP begins work in a village, identifying baseline health/economic status and identifying available resources;

- determining coverage of the village population by service providers (traditional birth attendants, poultry vaccinator, family planning depot holders, *para* committee members);

- identifying linkages between traditional service providers ('quacks', other local doctors, clinics, government services) and *para* committee members and villagers;

- planning/objectives setting by *para* committee members early on in the project cycle;

- identifying and then ranking pertinent health problems/issues faced by villagers in order to prioritise those to be addressed;

- periodic evaluations/assessments by *para* committees of their accomplishments (as well as problems faced) leading into future planning/objectives setting ie., the way in which the women used the information in this exercise;

- using information gathered in the graduation ceremony conducted when WDP leaves the village, ie. outlining accomplishments of the *para* committee members (information could also be shared in other fora with community members and community leaders, possibly with government health workers too).

17. APPLYING THE METHODS TO A NEW CONTEXT

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I am attempting to put into practice what I learnt about PRA. In brief I am studying the effects of dams and drought on the fishery of a floodplain from a socio-economic perspective. The main dam was built nearly 20 years ago - and coincided more or less with a severe drought in the region and a trend in reduced rainfall that lasted throughout most of the 70s. In this first phase of the research I have been carrying out village surveys in a stratified random sample of 24 villages, to get some picture of the regional trends in impact and people's adaptation to it.

Participatory Mapping

I found participatory mapping to be problematic at the level of this village survey. I think that one reason for this is the highly dynamic and variable nature of the floodplain. I am interested in fishing resources, but the distribution of fishing sites and their productivity vary from year to year and also during the year. Places that are very dry now or that are being used to grow residual moisture cow-peas, will be under water in three month's time. This is not an insurmountable problem, but it does make mapping very complex.

Probably one way around this would be to draw a series of maps - for rainy season and dry season, and then for before the dams and for now. This is what I propose to do when I have selected villages for carrying out research at the level of the household. But for now, there is not time to draw four maps for every village I visit. I am realising that "Rapid Rural Appraisal" methods are in actual fact anything but rapid! To explain what is required and to give people time to carry out the mapping task and then to ask questions and add to and discuss the completed map is a very lengthy process.

Ranking Exercises

I have had most success with the ranking exercises. I have been getting the group to rank the relative importance of the main economic activities in the floodplain for their village, and also to score them. Doing this for the 'before' and 'after' situation I have built up a good picture of how the economy in different parts of the floodplain has responded to the changes. But quite apart from the usefulness of the results, I have been amazed by the transformation that occurs in the meeting when the exercise begins. To represent each production activity I have plastic bags containing samples of products or produce. As soon as I get them out everything changes from the rather sedate and disciplined interview that had gone before. The group is instantly animated, the bags are passed around with lots of laughter and comment and discussion. There follows an hour or two of heated debate and 100 per cent participation.

I tend to do the ranking half way through the meeting. You could draw a good graph of participation (or noise!) levels against time, which follows a gradual decline from the start of the meeting, then rises rapidly and reaches a peak during the ranking. The ranking has provided the point of departure for discussions on each of the activities concerned - the reasons for the changes that have taken place and their relative importance. I think that a lot of what I have discovered through this method will challenge much that has been written about the economy of the floodplain and the impact of the dams.

Conclusion

Some mixed results therefore, but generally I am very happy with the way things are going. Trying to apply participatory methods within the constraints and rigours required by a piece of 'academic' research was never going to be easy, but it seems to have gone very well. And anyway, I could not bear the thought of ticking boxes.

Most gratifying was the comment that I got as I left the last village that I visited. The village head remarked that they had received a visit two years ago from people who had asked them some questions, but that this time, with me, it had been a very different experience. I asked him what he meant by this. My interpreter had some difficulty translating the reply, but said that the village head had remarked that with the other people it had been a very "heavy occasion", but with me they had enjoyed themselves.

18. PRA LEARNING METHODS IN AGRICULTURAL POLICY ANALYSIS: IMPLICATIONS FOR TRAINING

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Participatory learning methods have most frequently been used by NGOs engaged in development activities within a discrete, well-defined and geographically-concentrated area: a village, community, watershed or other relatively restricted geographical or socio-economic sphere. In our programme in Nepal we are attempting to adapt the participatory approach to the problems of information collection for purposes of policy analysis in agriculture and related natural resource management. Here the problems and issues are probably very different than for the above 'NGO-development' model, differences which are reflected in the type of training methods to be adopted. In terms of the purpose and modality of the exercise, the major points of distinction from the 'NGO mode' are that:

- Policy analysis must necessarily adopt a macro perspective, so that geographical concentration is neither possible nor desirable.

- Ideally, staff for information gathering for agricultural policy analysis should be government extension agents.

- It is true that if good policy analysis ultimately results in the implementation of more responsive and problem-orientated policies, rural communities will benefit. However, from the point of view of the rural communities there is no clear, demonstrable and direct beneficial linkage between providing information and receiving subsequent benefits.

The above points imply that training exercises for policy-oriented PRA must be custom-designed, with particular emphasis on the following points.

First, government staff typically have a more 'top-down' approach than NGO staff. It is therefore even more necessary to stress the importance of the participatory approach and seek to reverse attitudes and thinking.

Secondly, the hierarchical structure of government extension systems make horizontal linkages difficult, especially across different administrative regions and different agencies. It is therefore essential to use training programmes to help foster cooperation and positive peer group pressure to facilitate research that will be both mutually compatible and consistently rigorous across the network.

The time requirements imposed by the above will restrict the time available for teaching PRA techniques, while the geographically scattered nature of the network and the absence of formal supervision of research (as would exist in an NGO) means that the teaching of techniques must be unusually thorough. This in turn argues for:

- Restricting the number of techniques handled in a single workshop.

- Paying particular attention to techniques likely to be useful in policy analysis (eg. trend analysis).

- Having all groups practice the same technique at the same time on different groups of farmers (in order to facilitate discussion and mutual interchange of ideas, experiences and difficulties).

- Having a series of training workshops, preferably at different workshop sites, to further exchange experiences and to introduce or develop new techniques on the basis of the growing experience of the network members. Having a series of training exercises instead of just one will also help strengthen the network and reinforce collegiality and positive peer group pressure.

- Since there is no direct linkage between information supplied by farmers and benefits they will receive, even more stress than usual has to be laid on building rapport with the farmers. Since this is something extension workers are supposed to do anyway, discussion of how to achieve this and a sharing of positive and negative experiences should be a major focal point of all training workshops.

The growing trend towards multi-party democracy in Nepal and many other developing countries should provide a strong stimulus for adopting such a focus.

19. RAPID RURAL APPRAISAL TRAINING FOR BASELINE DATA COLLECTION AND TARGET GROUP IDENTIFICATION

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Introduction

Training in the use of rapid rural appraisal for baseline data collection and target group identification was recently conducted in Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. The training was undertaken as part of the Sulawesi Regional Development Project (SRDP), a joint venture between the Government of Indonesia and the Government of Canada, for which the University of Guelph acts as the Canadian executing agency. SRDP efforts focus on two major areas:

1. Strengthening and increasing the capabilities of planning agencies throughout Sulawesi.

2. Field projects addressing poverty alleviation in strategic areas of development to act as testing grounds for innovative approaches for rural development.

Nine trainees took part in the training, six drawn from government planning and sectoral agencies, and three from local non-governmental organisations. The six-week training exercise was designed and led by Tania Li, an anthropologist from Dalhousie University, Canada. As I was conducting research into training and the potential institutionalisation of RRA in Sulawesi at the time, it was possible for me to join the RRA team. I acted as observer and assistant trainer.

The training and data collection exercise had the following main objectives:

- To train a team of government and non-governmental development workers to apply RRA approaches, with the long-term goal of preparing trainers for future RRA activities in the province.

- To conduct RRAs, and collect basic socio-economic data in three target villages in order to identify the poorest members of the population.

- To establish better criteria for identifying relative poverty in the various socio-environmental zones found in the target villages.

- To provide recommendations for refocusing programmes to better meet the needs of the rural poor in the target region.

Context

Training activities focused on Tinombo-Tomini-Moutong (TTM), an isolated cluster of villages located on the east coast of Central Sulawesi. The three target villages were chosen from 12 villages located in SRDP's Strategic Area of Development. TTM is located between two large and fairly

successful transmigration areas along the coast. Narrow coastline gives way to miles of steep rolling mountains. 90 per cent of the population of TTM are farmers, most of whom work marginal lands. Much of the area has been deforested due to increased population and shifting cultivation practices. In recent years, farming has become increasingly difficult as decreasing soil fertility and the area's growing population place more pressure on the natural environment. The region is divided into three principal socio-environmental zones:

- The narrow coastal plain and foothills, this is the most 'developed' zone, serviced by a new road and most government ministries

- The middle hills, which can be reached by hikes of two to four hours along footpaths only. Government services (health teams, formal education, agricultural extension) sporadically reach some middle hill populations.

- The inner hills, which can only be reached by four to twelve hour walks. Except for a few areas where missionaries are operating, most of the inner hill population remain beyond the present reach of government services.

The Training

Training involved four days of classroom activities, three weeks conducting RRAs in the villages, and about 16 days for data analysis and report writing. Classroom training covered the usual gamut of PRA/RRA topics (rationale, methods, attitudes and behaviour, preparation for fieldwork etc.). Approximately one week was spent conducting the RRA in each of the villages. The teams of trainees broke up into teams of five, each accompanied by local translators/research assistants, and guides to help find the way. Teams typically over-nighted in villages for two or three nights, then returned to a base camp to briefly review and discuss findings, refine and redirect their approach, and hold orientation meetings with members of the next target village. Since the use of RRA for basic data collection and target group identification was new to everyone on the team, the 'learning by doing' was all the more critical. A lot of fine-tuning and innovation was required along the way.

The Target Group Identification Strategy

A mixture of RRA and baseline data collection techniques were used to support target group identification. The team followed a set routine in the field:

1. Collection of relevant secondary data.
2. Participatory mapping for social and environmental data.
3. Baseline data collection.
4. Application of other RRA methods.

Secondary data was collected during orientation meetings held with villagers and local representatives along the coast. During these meetings a sketch map of each village was constructed with the aid of villagers. This process not only acted as a good rapport-builder, but provided the team with a good overview of the sprawling villages so that sample areas and hiking routes could be chosen. During these introductory meetings, the RRA team ensured that villagers had a clear introduction to the team and our research objectives. In other words we told them who we were (and who we weren't!), why we'd come, and how we proposed to work. This establishment of trust between villagers and the

team was a critical prerequisite for conducting the RRAs. Without such rapport, we would have been wasting our time in trying to collect valid socio-economic information.

For each of the more remote study sites, villagers were asked to hike to a central point in the hills to meet with the RRA team. After introductions, participatory mapping was used as an ice-breaker. Mapping was typically done on the ground using available sticks, rocks, leaves and so on as symbols. It was always enlightening and fun, and served several important purposes. It helped to orientate the team to land use patterns and local environmental conditions. It generated a list of households needed for the collection of basic socio-economic data, and to aid in the selection of key informants. In addition, the mapping provided a focus for discussion of local development problems, potentials and possible solutions.

Once the mapping was complete, the team conducted short interviews to collect basic baseline data. Data collected was based on a number of direct and indirect socio-economic indicators including:

- the number of active gardens maintained by a household;
- quantity and relative productivity of clove, cocoa and cashew trees;
- mode of access to land;
- ratio of adult farmers to dependents;
- adult literacy rates; and
- percentage of children attending school.

A simple format was used as a guide for interviewing representatives from each household. Each interview took about 10 minutes and yielded an amazing amount of demographic and economic data. Villagers were surprisingly forthcoming, providing very specific economic data. We found it possible for teams of three to four people (including local helpers) to collect basic socio-economic data from 40-50 households in less than two hours. The validity of data collected during these interviews was later cross-checked against information yielded by wealth ranking and interviews with individual and focus groups of key informants. Interviews with women, single-parent families, and widows were used to cross-check quantitative data and help offset potential gender and poverty biases in data collection.

Most villagers could not spare a long time away from their fields or home. For this reason, some team members collected basic data while others conducted semi-structured interviews and focus-group discussion with key informants. Where possible, wealth-ranking and transect-drawing exercises were also carried out at the same time. Once the collection of basic socio-economic data was completed, a large group discussion was held to examine local development problems, potential and possible solutions. These discussions were generally very lively and provided good opportunities for probing and cross-checking. Team members spent the remainder of the day visiting households to conduct interviews, do wealth-ranking or work with villagers to construct transects and transition diagrams.

Results of the Training Process

Although physically demanding and fairly long in duration, the training was extremely well-received. All nine trainees commented on the depth and usefulness of learning they received over the six-week period. Positive attitudinal changes were perhaps the most apparent and far-reaching. For many of the trainees, the RRA exercise was their first 'off-road' investigation - this despite the fact that most team members had several years of experience working in development planning. A number of trainees were quite concerned about what we would find upon trekking into the hills. Questions like: *"What will we eat?"*, and *"Where will we stay and with whom?"* abounded. The idea of hiking into

an area populated by 'slash-and-burn' animist peoples was intimidating to many. Indeed, more than once the team had been informed that the hill people *"don't wear any clothes, and sleep in the trees"*. We never did see any evidence of such practices.

Once in the hills however, the team quickly developed a new respect and understanding for the inland agriculturalists. We realised that the age-old rotational farming practices used by locals were not implicitly devastating to the environment, and had for years allowed villagers to undertake a sustainable and productive form of agriculture on marginal and fragile soils. Population pressures had simply forced shorter fallow periods, and thus the onset of land degradation. We noted the remarkable data collection and analytical abilities of the team's locally-recruited research assistants (all of whom had only rudimentary formal education). Trainees likewise recognised the importance of collecting good qualitative and quantitative data, and validating and analysing that information with villagers.

All team members learned a great deal about the problems of rural development tourism and associated poverty biases. New skills such as how to conduct semi-structured interviews, work with villagers to construct transects, or do mapping and wealth-ranking were acquired. The process of analysing and inter-relating qualitative and quantitative data was new and fairly difficult for most team members. Trainees commented on the need for considerably more practice to reinforce skills in this area. All nine trainees expressed an interest in obtaining more training and opportunities for using RRA.

Results of Target Group Identification Strategy

Successes

The combination of short, formal surveying and exploratory RRA methods worked quite well. The following attributes were noted:

- A wealth of quantitative socio-economic data was complemented and informed by the broad-based qualitative data collected. This provided an important understanding of environmental and economic transitions involving complex interactions between migration, cropping and land-use patterns, rainfall and soil fertility.

- Crucial information regarding livelihood strategies was likewise compiled, and locally-valid criteria for identifying relative poverty were generated, and found to be quite reliable.

- Problem-solving discussions with villagers, and supporting quantitative data helped to identify recommendation domains for particular agro-environmental zones. Less than a week after the team's presentation of findings two government ministries made last minute changes to programme funding proposals in order to accommodate locally-identified educational and extension needs.

Problem areas:

Several weaknesses and problem areas were identified.

- The large amount of quantitative data yielded proved cumbersome. Too much time was spent organising, tabulating and cross-checking data. In fact, the team was caught a bit off guard. We had not expected to be able to collect so much basic data in so little time. After some

experimentation however, the team decided to use simple data entry forms (for the more formal socio-economic data only). This simplified the organisation of data and helped with important in-field triangulation of information to check consistency, validity and reliability. To increase efficiency, future target group identification efforts may employ two field assistants. One team of locally-recruited workers will undertake participatory mapping and baseline data collection. This team will be followed by an RRA team who will verify information collected by the baseline data team, and conduct further exploratory RRA activities.

- Too much time was also spent writing detailed reports describing hamlets of 40-50 households. In 10 days, the team produced 22 hamlet-level reports and three village-level reports. While this afforded useful training opportunities, it was repetitive, time-consuming and not very cost-effective. Village-level reports appear to offer sufficient detail and analysis, and helped to identify priority target areas and groups, and to generate programme recommendations and refinements.

- It is extremely important to explain clearly what RRA/PRA approaches can and cannot do. Our team communicated what RRA can do, but was probably not clear enough in outlining its limitations. While the exercise provided a great deal of valuable and reliable information, and important programme recommendations, some government officials expected the team to deliver detailed project proposals. The fact that good RRAs often require follow-up investigation and topical inquiries should have been stressed more, to avoid raising expectations and leading to disillusionment about RRA. This is especially important at a time when it is important to build up institutional confidence in the RRA/PRA approach.

The Potential for Institutionalising RRA/PRA

Our team spent some time discussing whether or not RRA should be built into official planning procedures in Indonesia. A few of the key issues which emerged from this discussion are listed below.

- There is a need for more qualified trainers. This issue has been discussed before in *RRA Notes*. In Indonesia, relatively few potential RRA trainers exist. Although KEPAS, an organisation based in Java, has provided RRA training based on agro-ecosystems analysis to many rural development workers, more trainers promoting more types of RRA are needed.

- There is a need for wider promotion of, and advocacy for, RRA. The legitimacy of RRA/PRA approaches still requires reinforcement among policy and decision makers. Until RRA is seen as a valid and cost-effective planning approach, many officials will remain hesitant to promote it. It is thus critical to involve officials as much as possible in pre-RRA orientations and mini in-field sabbaticals. Likewise, it is important for RRA teams to continue to find ways to prove that RRA approaches can and do generate reliable and manageable qualitative and quantitative data for planning.

- Money and time for RRA training and in-field use must be formally allocated in annual budgets and work-plans.

- Timing of RRA initiatives is critical. In Indonesia, exploratory RRA activities could serve as good preparation for annual Village Development Consensus Meetings for which the Village Resilience Committee is expected to develop a list of project priorities and

preliminary project proposals. While bottom-up planning activities are frustrated by a number of factors, the criticism that locally-generated projects are nothing more than unsubstantiated 'wish-lists' is one common reason cited for top-down selection of projects. Pre-meeting RRAs undertaken on a village, agro-ecosystem or regional basis could help villagers identify and describe local problems and potentials, complete with supporting data. This strategy would help increase levels of popular participation (by women, by the poor and less-powerful, by the landless) in project identification and prioritisation. The well-documented information yielded in this way could counter the wish-list argument and help lower-level planners justify and promote projects suggested by villagers.

- Formalisation of RRA activities might reduce the quality and flexibility of the methodology. RRA/PRA approaches are perhaps not for everyone. Their institutionalisation may force those who are, for whatever reason, less disposed toward PRA/RRA, to carry them out nevertheless. This is bound to suffocate the flexibility and innovation that marks a good appraisal.

20. APPLYING PRA METHODS TO PARTICIPATORY MONITORING AND EVALUATION: REPORT ON A COURSE HELD IN EL OBEID, SUDAN

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Background

The idea for this course arose during a visit to Sudan in 1992 to discuss Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E) with staff in various forest projects. In some of the projects visited there was a lack of acquaintance with participatory methods, consequently it was difficult for them to consider embarking on participatory M&E.

There are many methods which could be useful for PM&E and it seemed that a PRA course could be an opportunity to explore some of the issues around PM&E and introduce a selection of possible methods. Looking through the PRA literature there was remarkably little discussion of its application and use for M&E, despite the fact that some tools in particular seem to have the potential for this type of application.

The Course

Training was conducted largely in Arabic by Development Support Programme Khartoum, which is part of Community Development Services (CDS) in Cairo. They have conducted various PRA courses in Sudan over the last year and were themselves very keen to explore the use of PRA for PM&E. Due to the problems of communicating with Sudan and to the trainers being overworked there was not enough opportunity to discuss the course contents in advance. Their plan largely followed the SCF/IIED manual *PRA for Community Development* (1991).

I arrived in advance so as to have a couple of days pre-discussion with them which was very useful and we were able to re-orientate the course to suit our specific needs. I had a small input during the actual training, particularly on the concept of PM&E and the application of various PRA tools to PM&E.

The course took place over two weeks in Kordofan. Field work was conducted in villages with varying involvement with SOS Sahel's Natural Forest Management Project, near to El Obeid. Eighteen participants came from NGOs and government organisations (some involved with UNSO). A large number of the participants were foresters and work was conducted in villages which were involved in forestry activities.

The course was entirely self-funded (apart from my input) and participants paid $460 each. This could have been much less but they subsidised five people from government organisations who were given free places.

What follows are comments on the course and a summary of the methods we found most useful for M&E.

Comments on the Course

In general the course went very well. Participants and trainers worked extremely hard (and it was hot!) usually from 7.30am until 9.30pm. However several problem areas emerged which are worth sharing with other PRA trainers/users.

Attitude to Villagers

The course was largely aimed at project manager and extension supervisor level, so many of the participants were not regular field workers. In some cases it proved difficult to encourage the development of a 'suitable' PRA attitude in their approach in the villages. This may partly have been because the trainers concentrated on PRA methods rather than attitude (I had too short an amount of time within the course to cover this area adequately).

In addition it was felt by agency staff in the area that the arrival of such a large group would put too much of a financial strain on the villagers. We were therefore advised not to sleep in the villages and made a base camp in a central spot. This will inevitably have hindered the development of rapport with the villagers and a team feeling amongst trainees. It may account for the fact that one or two participants were unable to abandon their didactic tendencies and their apparent inability to appreciate the advantages of symbols for illiterate people (and for me!). It also reduced the amount of fieldwork we could do, being restricted to starting work after 10am because villagers were busy. If we had been staying in the villages it would probably have been possible to work with those who were free, particularly the women for whom it is harder to find free time.

Lack of Confidence Amongst Participants

Most of the work was done inside meeting spaces for the men and inside houses with the women. It was noticeable that when starting the PRA work in the villages there was a general lack of confidence among the team members. This manifested itself in various ways. For example, the teams did not initially encourage villagers to leave enough space for their drawings. Someone would start a map and then find themselves bumping into the furniture and have to start again

Use of Symbols

Another problem area, which we were still addressing right up until the end of the course, was the use of symbols. Team members were slow to encourage villagers to look for suitable symbols, sometimes they just wrote the word in the sand or else they used stones or matchboxes or whatever came easily to hand. The difficulties of this were immediately apparent to me, as an illiterate in Arabic. Yet despite discussing this with the teams, many of them still failed to use symbols adequately. The drawbacks became even clearer during feedback with villagers when they were given paper copies of their drawings. In one village we asked a group of children to choose the diagrams they preferred - all the ones without writing! We also found that while it was very useful to use the leaves of particular species as symbols on the ground, it was difficult to reproduce these accurately enough to suggest the correct tree in the paper versions. It was also difficult to remember what the matchbox or stone had represented.

In an effort to address this problem the trainers asked people to give a personal evaluation of the course using symbols. One of the participants gave a presentation of the use of PRA tools in

choosing a wife. He went through the secondary sources (identified with appropriate symbols) which he would consult to collect information about her (difficult in a segregated Muslim culture). He also used diagrams to make suppositions about her lifestyle before and after marriage. The course participants found this an amusing way of summarising and reviewing methods! The trainers presented a series of symbols and, amidst much laughter, the course was asked to choose which participants these symbols represented (particularly apt was the use of a picture of a microphone to describe the more inveterate talkers). Lastly we asked everyone to prepare and present a personal evaluation of the course's impact on them in the form of an impact diagram using only symbols.

Application of PRA Methods to PM&E

Participants were slow to grasp the usefulness of PRA for PM&E. Even on the last field day when we had emphasised they were to concentrate on PM&E there were still groups wanting to complete their repertoire of PRA tools and do 'daily routines', for example. There were probably two reasons for this:

- This approach was new to the trainers and they had not put enough time into planning and amending their typical PRA format (partly because they were very busy, even overloaded);

- It was perhaps too ambitious to do a two-week course which included PRA methods, psychological and personal techniques, and PM&E. Participants wanted to experiment with all of the techniques but ran out of time towards the end because we were asking them to focus on evaluation. Not staying in the villages reduced the amount of fieldwork time (but it did make it easier for the trainers to monitor the work).

The tools found to be most useful for evaluation were:

- *Impact Diagrams* (Figure 1). However one problem which arose with these was the villagers' tendency to consider only positive impacts. The course participants did not facilitate enough consideration of the negative impacts. We addressed this on the final days of the course.

- *Impact Matrices* (Figure 2).

- *Evaluation Matrices* (Figures 3 and 4). This was developed from the Innovation Matrix in the SCF/IIED manual and participants used it on the last day. Its purpose was to generate a discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of different forestry activities. We specifically requested the teams to ask villagers to identify their own criteria, but in practice most of the teams were poor at facilitating this.

All in all it was a very useful experience - we are now waiting for the results of each participant's action plan to see if they have been able to apply any of it practically.

Figure 1. **Impact Diagram: Contribution of Improved Stoves to Raising Income in Burbur Village**

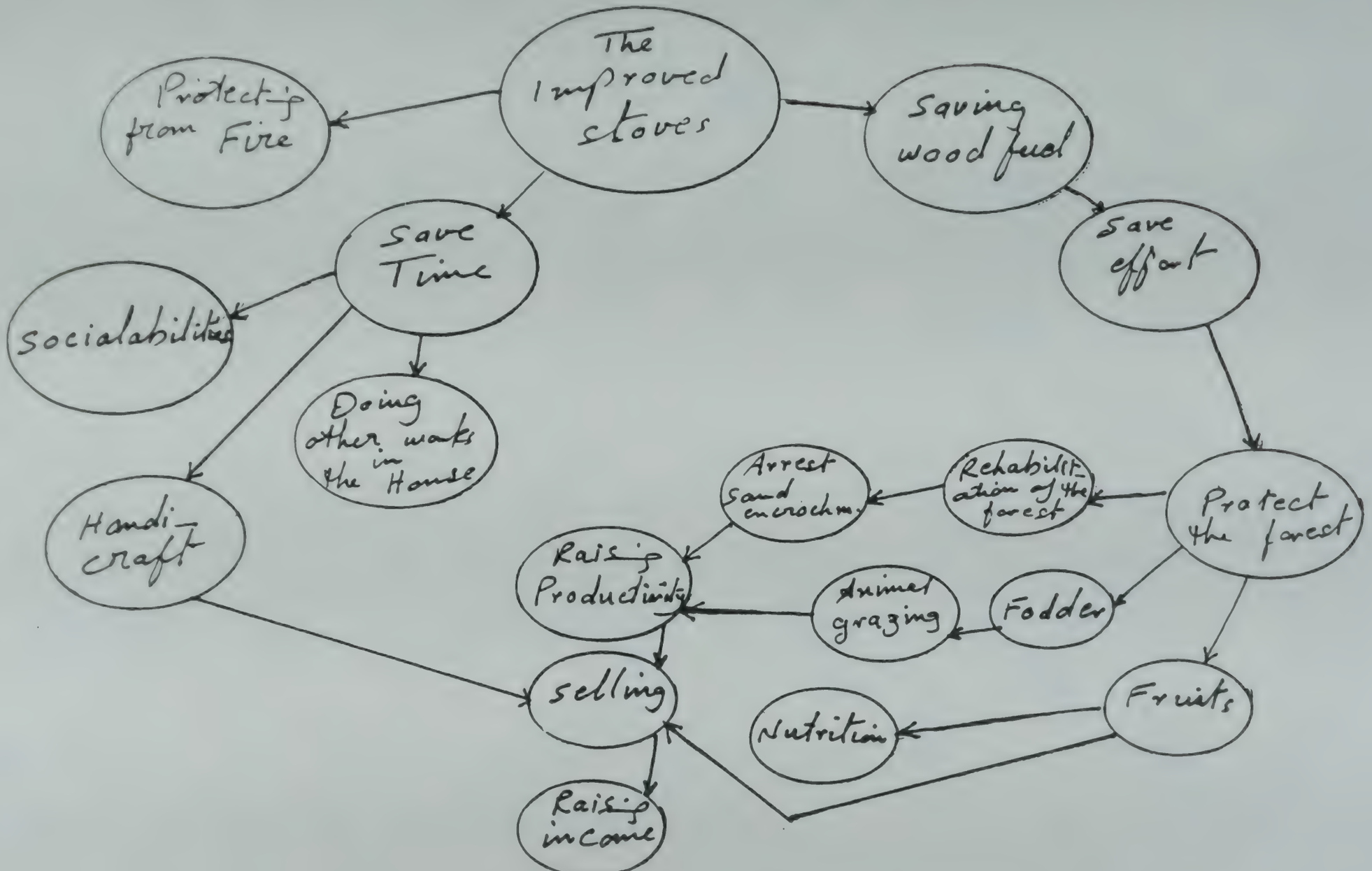
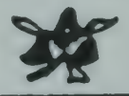


Figure 2. **Impact Matrix for Types of Cooking Stoves, El Hujairat Village**

Impression	symbol used	STOVE / CRITERIA	Improved Mud stove	Metal stove	 Traditional stove 'sadaja'
Red cloth		Heat Intencity	SSS	II	I
Triangle		smoke	II	III	I
zigzag line		Cooking speed	III	II	I
Bone		Cooking Quality	III	II	I
stick		Fuel wood concumption	III		II
stone		Durability	II	III	I
		SCORE	IIII IIII IIII IIII	IIII IIII IIII	IIII III
		RESULT	I	II	III

/ : symbol of small stick

Figure 3. **Evaluation Matrix for Different Forest-related Activities**

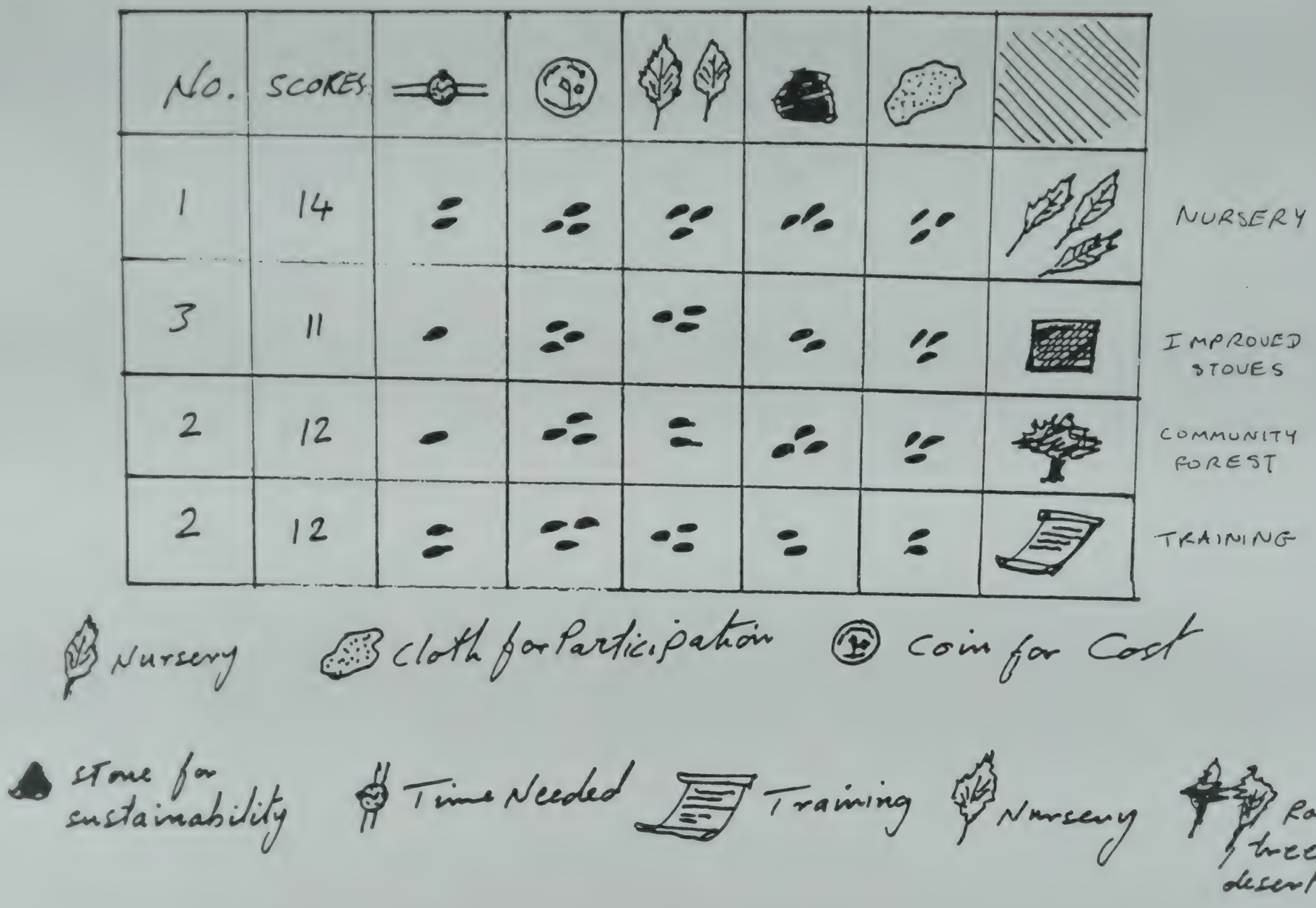
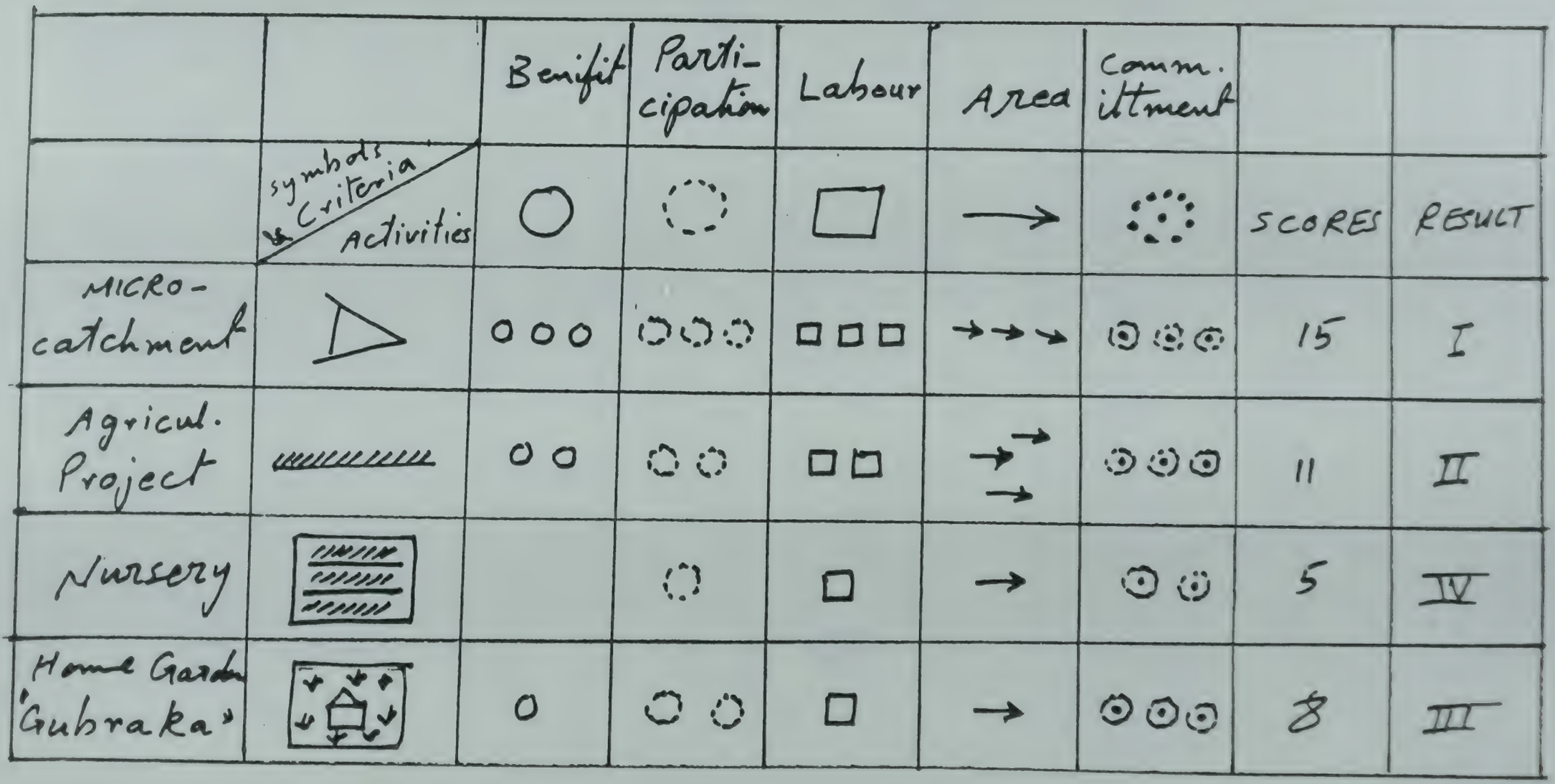


Figure 4. **Evaluation Matrix for Different Agricultural Activities, El Hujairat Village**



21. TRAINING VILLAGE ANALYSTS: FROM PRA METHODS TO PROCESS

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Background

This paper discusses the experiences of an NGO, the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) in training village analysts in participatory appraisal and planning. It outlines how their training leads to effective and sustainable development programmes.

AKRSP works with village communities in Gujarat State, western India. It was established in 1985 to promote and create an environment in which village communities, through their own village institutions (VIs) could manage their local natural resources in a productive, equitable and sustainable manner. The process uses participatory appraisal and planning for the formation of village institutions to implement natural resource management plans prepared by the villagers.

The villagers are encouraged to develop a local cadre of volunteers who develop expertise in appraisal, planning, implementation, management and monitoring and to also build functional links between the state, NGOs, cooperatives and financial institutions in the area. These volunteers are accountable to the VIs who pay them performance-related incentives. The VIs are in the process of federating into a regional body which will act as a support organisation to local VIs. It will spearhead the development of new VIs and the evolution of functional and management expertise at the village level.

The role of AKSRP in this process is mainly one of support:

- it initially provides training in appraisal and planning for volunteers selected by the community;
- it facilitates the formation of VIs and enables the community to assess the support it will require to strengthen them; and
- it tries to provide training support in technical, financial, management and monitoring areas.

The emphasis is not on creating a large support organisation with expertise in all areas, but rather on encouraging villagers to volunteer to become 'para-professionals' in different areas depending on their interests and abilities. The AKRSP training strategy has been to involve itself mainly in the training of village trainers and encourages them to conduct training programmes for new trainees. This has enabled AKRSP to concentrate on a wide range of issues and facilitate the faster spread of the programme.

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is the major training methodology used to enable the volunteers to become village analysts, managers and agents of institutional change. PRA increases the

volunteers' capacity to interact with all sections of the village community and to develop a common perspective of village natural resources development. This also aids the development of functional leaders in the community who are able to carry out planning more objectively. This is in contrast to traditional leaders who mostly develop plans according to the needs of government departments and external institutions.

Designing Training Programmes at the Village Level

We now describe some of the aspects which are considered when designing a programme for training village volunteers in planning, appraisal and analysis:

- Most of the training takes place in the village. The training group includes representatives from ten villages in the area and is based on the practical problems of the village where the training is held. The VI is encouraged to use the training programme as an opportunity for programme development and to provide VI meetings as a platform for testing the ideas and skills developed by the volunteers.

- The training places a strong emphasis on problem-solving and decision-making. Problems are discussed and alternative solutions appraised. For example, the problem of low agricultural productivity is discussed by volunteers, who are encouraged to analyse the reasons for low productivity in different household farms. This allows them to appreciate the different constraints facing individual households and helps them to develop specific plans with the people.

- Training is iterative, rather than a one-off process, so that volunteers are able to analyse certain issues in detail and then report the findings back to each other.

- Significant time is devoted to sharing experiences amongst the group. This ensures that lateral learning occurs between the villages. It also helps villagers to develop confidence in analysing and finding solutions to regional problems, by giving a broad base to their expertise. Furthermore, it is useful in creating a regional body of expertise for mutual support.

- The skills of analysis, planning and appraisal are further consolidated through a number of exercises in the village facilitated by the volunteers. They are encouraged to make presentations to the members of the VI as well as to each other. This ensures wide consultation and the development of skills before development programmes are taken up. It also ensures that the members of the VI are included in the process and allows them to evaluate the performance of the village volunteers.

- Every six months the work done by the volunteers is evaluated by the VIs and by the other volunteers. This process is facilitated by AKRSP and linked with the payment of incentives to the volunteers by the VIs and taking up further development programmes in the village.

Process of Village Level Training

We now describe the major steps of a training programme for village volunteers especially concerned with watershed management. The process is divided into a number of stages.

Introductory Phase

The VI is asked to nominate a group of three or four volunteers for training, preferably from varied wealth backgrounds (defined in terms of farm size and land ownership). The selected volunteers are asked to carry out 'test' exercises in their own village before participating in the training programme. They are given the choice of using verbal or visual methods for collecting information. These enable the volunteers to develop analytical abilities and help them to prepare for the course, which greatly increases the effectiveness of the training programme. Some example of test exercises include:

- inventory of soil and water conservation practices used by the people, and their economic returns;
- local soil classification and taxonomy;
- classification of households based on their dependence on common property resources and fuelwood consumption patterns; and
- classification of lands by productivity.

The training programme starts with presentations by participants of their experiences. This enables trainees to talk about their village's specific problems and helps them to develop confidence in presentation and analysis. This process of initial presentation also creates an interactive environment for the training, avoids a lecture format and encourages interaction. This is followed by group exercises to develop group dynamics and teamwork. Peer group feedback from these exercises allows trainees to look critically at their own behaviour.

Next there is a brief introduction to the methods, using slides, charts and illustrations. All the methods are discussed in relation to an issue, problem or decision. After the description of each method the participants are asked to practice them with a group of villagers. This helps them become familiar with the methods and to analyse the problems related to the resource they are studying. An example of just such an exercise could be mapping the productivity of private agricultural lands and analysing the reasons for variations in productivity.

Appraisal Phase

The second phase of the programme concentrates on aggregation, appraisal and planning. Here trainees become involved in developing options for natural resource management. They are encouraged to make presentations to the different groups in the village, aggregate village natural resource management plans and conduct discussions on the feasibility of these plans. They also conduct talks on how these plans would contribute to the community and whether a VI should be set up to implement them. This helps the host village to develop its plan and also equips the volunteers to carry out similar exercises in the future.

Each volunteer is asked to give verbal or written feedback on what they have learnt from the programme, the problems they encountered and in which areas they feel more support would be needed in future. At this stage the volunteers are encouraged to work out with each other ways of providing mutual support in their future work. This initiates a support system to encourage the sustainability of the process.

Next each team conducts appraisals with limited support from AKRSP, although AKRSP participates in some cases as an observer. Neighbouring village volunteers are also encouraged to observe. Doing an exercise independently enables volunteers to develop confidence in their own villages and increases their analytical capacity. It also helps them to identify problems faced in their villages.

This is followed by a feedback and refresher training programme in which presentations are made by all the participants about the exercises in the village, describing the issues discussed and the problems faced. Active discussion among the participants is encouraged to facilitate critical self-awareness and to develop networking between the volunteers. Discussions are also held on how to solve the problems encountered in appraisal and planning.

The volunteers, on their return to the village, complete the village planning exercise jointly with the VI. They are supervised by the master extension volunteers in carrying out the analysis. At this stage some volunteers who are also trained in technical aspects of watershed management, conduct topical appraisals in watersheds on specific technologies and practices and work out a programme of watershed development on a micro-watershed and village basis.

Selection of Master Extension Volunteers

During the training the volunteers who prove to be good facilitators are identified as potential trainers by the group. These are known as master extension volunteers. Once selected, the master extension volunteers are then trained as trainers, during which they are encouraged to design training programmes and develop training material using simple language to illustrate local problems. They are also taught how to handle audio visual equipment. In addition they are encouraged to work out the management aspects of training programmes. They then conduct a training programme for new village volunteers, during which AKRSP staff act as observers and make critical comments to the village trainers to improve their training skills.

Training for Programme Implementation, Management and Monitoring

The appraisal phase is followed by training volunteers in the use of participatory methods for the implementation, management and monitoring of the programmes. This ensures that skills in using the methods are further consolidated and that they can be related to all stages of the programme cycle. Extension volunteers are encouraged to be aware of any groups that may have been excluded during the exercises. Certain material produced during the appraisal phase, for example productivity maps, are used as baselines, and the volunteers are encouraged to collect impact information using a similar framework. New methods, such as impact diagrams which assess the effect of new issues, are also introduced to the group.

Implications for Development

The process described above takes about three to six months in a project cycle of five to seven years. It requires high investments in training and human resource development. The end product is a local cadre of village analysts and functional leaders who can take up the responsibility of initiating development process, village institution development and ultimately the management of development programmes.

From our experience, the initial investment made in developing a local body of village analysts comes in handy during the implementation and management phase of the programme. A good example is the use of well-being ranking classification by the village volunteers to plan employment programmes (giving preference to the economically weakest households in the village) and using it for better targeting in the event of scarce resources. Extension volunteers also use some of these methods to

monitor their field visits and coverage of their services to the members of the VI. They also develop their own monitoring indicators and methods.

However this process of intensive training would not be sustainable if it was not followed by a process of action and decision making, leading to practical outcomes for the village community. People take more of an interest in developing their own capacity and are more willing to commit themselves if the initial appraisal and planning process is matched by the delegation and decentralisation of both resources and management.

Our experience has shown that the cost of running such development programmes is lower, the speed and scale of development is faster and the development is more equitable. However, if you look at the history of most development programmes, rarely do they spend the first six months on these aspects. Even the programmes which start with the objective of allowing people to participate in appraisal and planning, end up using RRA (and not PRA) and professionals continue to analyse and decide for the people.

The main reason why the participation of people in analysis is not attempted or sustained is because most trainers are not concerned with the institution building aspects and are more concerned with getting the programmes started. Since empowerment and building institutional capacity are not considered major objectives of development programmes, most professionals end up using the village community members primarily in data collection and continue to analyse information and take decisions based on the information thus collected.

Constraints and Problems

If creating village analysts is so critical to the sustainability of development programmes, why is it not given adequate weighting by the development authorities? There are a number of reasons for this:

- The major constraint is the difficulty of developing training programmes which demystify the skills of analysis.

- The majority of the trainers, although keen to do training programmes at headquarters in town are often not so keen to spend time in villages conducting field-based training. This leads to the playing down of the field component and the participation of mainly NGO staff in such training programmes.

- Professionals often feel threatened when village volunteers start asserting themselves and innovating. Most trainers are not used to interactive learning and are unprepared for the increase in the analytical powers of village volunteers.

- And finally, training is considered as a line item in the budgets, and the skills are not linked with the decision-making framework of the development programmes.

It is important that we recognise that unless we spend enough time and resources on training and developing village analysts, and also on increasingly using them as trainers in development programmes, these programmes will be unsustainable. Participation and PRA will remain empty rhetoric. There is a strong case for investing more in training village analysts and trainers as opposed to the development of a body of external professionals who continue to dominate the decision-making process.

At present the picture is very discouraging. Most development programmes invest huge amounts of resources on external consultants who advise people on what they should do and how they should enable people to participate. One example is the development of geographical information systems (GIS) which require huge investments and external inputs. By spending just a fraction of such resources on training village analysts and developing local information systems for planning and decision making, the need for high flying consultants would be obviated. But are we prepared to make major reversals in the way we work?

22. PRA FOR TRAINING CHURCH WORKERS: AN EXAMPLE FROM TANZANIA

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Background

Like many other organisations, the Anglican Church in northern Tanzania has in the past tried to implement projects without the participation of the target group at the planning and implementation stage. A number of these projects have failed because they did not address the needs of the local population or were not sustainable.

In recent years, training people from rural parishes has become an important part of the diocese's development activities. At Munguishi Christian Training Centre training in theology and in rural development are combined. Most of the students are smallholder farmers with primary education who are working part time as evangelists.

During the pilot phase for the training programme, PRA methods proved very useful in studying the needs of rural communities. They can be used even with the limited manpower and financial resources available to our diocese.

After the first course at the training centre, a one week PRA was conducted in Kiru-Dick village (Babati District) with the students from this district. The PRA had three main objectives:

1. to help the local people discover the root causes of their problems and opportunities for development;

2. to train the former students and some diocesan staff in methods of participatory development;

3. to get a deeper understanding of the situation in the area in order to plan relevant training programmes.

The PRA Team

The PRA was conducted by a team of 20 people. A core team of four (one economist, two agriculturalists and one female parish worker) was responsible for organising the PRA. Two members of this core team had some previous experience of PRA methods, and five of the other team members were church workers who had received three months of training. The rest were local people, appointed by village government or the local parish to be team members. Thirteen team members were from the village, seven were outsiders (one of them an expatriate), five were women and fifteen were men. Except for the core team, all team members had only primary education. All of them were literate.

The Programme

A preliminary site visit was made one month before the seminar. This was to discuss the proposed PRA with village leaders and church elders. However no definite programme was agreed on then.

On arrival the PRA team discovered that the village government had already announced a programme to the village. As a result the programme prepared by the team was adjusted to some extent. Other changes were made during the course of the five days.

Our Experiences

The team members who came from the local community were the main target group of the PRA. For them the exercise was an intensive learning experience, which may help them to look systematically at their situation, find solutions to some of their problems and to develop their own resources. These insiders may play an important role as motivators for sustainable development in their community. With this target group in mind, it may be worth spending more time on team meetings in future PRAs.

A variety of methods were used during the PRA, including the use of secondary data, historical profiles, village maps, seasonal calendars, group discussions, social ranking, pairwise ranking of problems, transects, informal interviews and problem trees.

As there was poor participation in the meetings, we learnt more through the transect walk and interviews of key people (for the social ranking) than during group discussions.

Drawing a village map was difficult when done on flip-chart paper during a group meeting. Later the insiders from the team drew a good map on the ground. Unfortunately it was destroyed by rain the same day.

A lot of useful information was gathered through social ranking. We used local leaders, responsible for about ten households each (ten-cell leaders) as informants and asked questions about the resources and activities of these households.

Drawing problem trees for agriculture, livestock and health was a very useful tool for presenting the results of the PRA. It helped the people in the community understand the relationship between various problems and identify the root causes. Several team members made copies of these problem trees in order to explain the results to others.

Conclusions

As few of the team members had any experience of PRA, we all learnt a lot, both about the use of PRA methods, as well as about the situation in the village. During the preparation, as well as in the field, several publications about PRA were used as guidelines and for reference. In practice we learnt about PRA by doing it. If funds are available we would like to conduct a PRA with an experienced facilitator in the future.

As mentioned above, the focus of this PRA was on training local people and part-time church workers to get a systematic understanding of the problems and opportunities in the community. Obviously the PRA methods we used were suitable to facilitate this learning process. Whether this will enable them to use participatory methods and play an active role in the development of their communities will only be seen in time. The initial reactions are however encouraging.

23. PRA TRAINING IN THE PARTICIPANTS' WORKPLACE: AN EXAMPLE FROM KENYA

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Training in participatory methods has become an important agenda for local non- governmental organisations (NGOs) in Kenya. This new emphasis is not only due to the fact that NGOs foster participation in their approach to development, but it is also because of the apparent failure of the blueprint approach to development, favoured in the first two development decades throughout much of sub-Saharan Africa. This article recounts experiences in a PRA training workshop for staff of Redd Barna-Kenya, held at the Homa Hill Centre on the eastern shores of Lake Victoria. The intention is not to give details about the training but to comment on how the training needs were determined and to share some useful lessons that the training experience has revealed.

Redd Barna is a voluntary humanitarian organisation whose aim is to improve living conditions for needy communities with special emphasis on disadvantaged children and women. Redd Barna implements integrated community development projects in more than ten countries. In Kenya the organisation operates the Homa Hills Community Development Programme (HHCDP) which is an integrated rural development programme covering Kendu Division of Homa Bay District in agriculture, health, technology, training and construction. Obviously, the training needs of the various staff, agricultural extension and health workers, would differ at least in detail if not in substance.

Assessing Training Needs

The first task to be performed therefore was an assessment of training needs. Using group discussion, 'buzz' groups and story-telling methods for field experiences, workshop participants came up with six core areas they felt needed to be included in the training programme:

1. evaluation methodology;
2. participatory methodology;
3. team building;
4. communication skills, documentation and use of learning aids;
5. credit in rural development; and
6. early childhood education.

I was the facilitator for the first two, ie. evaluation and participatory methodologies, which are the ones I discuss here.

Having agreed upon the subjects to be covered, the next task was to decide upon a training schedule which would be suitable for each and every participant. This was very difficult to achieve. The various staff are involved in different programmes which run concurrently with some overlapping. Therefore allocating time was a rather complicated exercise. However, through open discussion it was decided that the training sessions for each of the two topics would be held separately, in January and February 1993.

An important omission in most PRA training workshops is the necessity of the trainees' participation in the process as opposed to merely being trained on farmers' participation. This is an important aspect especially as it bears upon the attitude of trainees and facilitator, and has potentially a major role to play in shaping the behaviour of 'front-line' development workers. The now widely-held view that farmers know and are therefore better managers of their resources, and we don't know, at least not everything, does not do justice to the notion of 'we' and 'them'. The change of attitude demanded by the paradigm shift which participatory approaches have brought to development research and practice should apply in most, if not all situations. Paulo Freire (1970) applied it in an educational context in his seminal book "*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*". Planners are increasingly finding use of participatory methods in creating neighbourhoods of consensus. It is this broader meaning of participation that should be integrated in all actions if change of obsolete attitudes among development researcher and practitioners is expected.

Training Location

As already mentioned, the PRA training was for staff of Redd Barna-Kenya at the Homa Hill Centre (ie. their place of work). This meant that the training sessions were often interrupted when participants were called to attend to one thing or another. This happened before the start of the training sessions and sometimes in the middle. The disruption caused by such interference cannot be overstated. The trainees expressed their displeasure and suggested that subsequent training be held at a venue preferably away from their work place so that they can concentrate. This generated quite a debate, with some people commenting, for example, that the interruptions were due to the failure of the participants to plan for training time within their work programmes. It was even suggested that a change of venue would not improve concentration as the participants could still find other things to do.

Place of training has not been a problem before. Generally, the village is considered the best setting for carrying out a PRA training exercise. However, a lot of PRA training exercises are still conducted in a classroom setting with one or two visits to the village to test some of the methods and techniques. Obviously, resource constraints and organisational logistics are important factors that determine the venue of a training workshop. Evidence from this experience in PRA training suggests that whenever possible, training should be conducted away from the participants' immediate place of work. This is necessary in order to have effective participation and minimal disruption.

24. JUGGLING GAME TO ENERGISE A SEMINAR

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In November 1992 we organised an international livestock seminar in Indonesia. An interesting mixture of people from very diverse backgrounds attended and I think almost everyone felt their minds were broadened by the event. Inevitably some people reacted (almost violently) against the PRA theme that weaved its way throughout the whole seminar. However, many people were left wanting to know more and another seminar is planned along the lines of participative farmer research and development.

As the week progressed an element of playful competition emerged between the various ideological camps and this culminated at the final closing session of the seminar. Each topic group had to make a short presentation of the key points of their session. A somewhat dry academic kicked off with a conventional lecture on using data to elucidate farm problems. Another followed with a long ramble on quantitative surveys and the insights they can provide into farmers' needs. At this point, at the end of a long and hard week, the audience was beginning to lag - eyes were drooping and heads sagging. It was the turn of the 'alternative approaches'.

Tim Leyland stood on the stage and began juggling three oranges. A few seconds lapsed. Sriskandarajah then spoke: *"Farmers operate complex, diverse risk prone farming systems"*. The audience woke up.

John Young (from ITDG) then stepped out of the audience wearing a suit. He studied the juggling Tim, and then he began to toss a single orange. Sriskandarajah spoke again: *"As professionals we often perceive a simplified version of the farmer's environment"*.

John (the scientist) deftly replaced his single orange with a small model black and white cow. He turned to face Tim (the farmer). Sriskandarajah intervened: *"The technology we develop is frequently inappropriate for farmers' needs"*. The scientist throws the model cow to the farmer and in doing so causes the farmer to drop all his oranges.

Whilst John and Tim re-collect the dropped balls, Sriskandarajah says: *"Participatory rural appraisal uses a basket of methods"* and Sonaiya, Stella Maranga, Raul Peresgrovas and myself step forward and plaster the names of different PRA methods onto a white board.

By this time Tim and John have collected themselves together and stand facing each other. They act out a scene where the farmer, by demonstration, teaches the scientist how to juggle with three balls. Sriskandarajah explains: *"PRA allows scientists to learn from farmers about their farming environment"*.

The farmer and scientists then begin to juggle together, exchanging each other's balls in mid juggle (very tricky). Sriskandarajah concludes: *"Participatory rural appraisal allows farmers and professionals to work together to solve their problems"*.

A standing ovation followed.

Raul Peresgrovas then gave a very moving speech on behalf of the participants and had the last word on participative approaches to change. I don't think anyone could have summed it up better:

> (rounding off his speech).... *"This seminar has been about the smallholder farmers."* (He then produces a short set of slides, accompanied by Indonesian music, to introduce us to different farming families from around the world). *"This is a shepherdess from Mexico..., a farmer from Indonesia.....and here is a Masaai family from Kenya.....I wish that some of these people could have been here with us today. I wonder what they would have said. Whatever you might think of PRA, remember that above all it gives these people a voice; it gives them a chance to be heard".*

25. TWENTY-ONE WAYS OF FORMING GROUPS

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Introduction

Teachers and trainers often need to form groups. Much of the best learning experiences and discovery take place through group activities and discussions. The purpose of this note is to provide a menu of some methods for forming groups. There must be many, not just those which follow. Please write in with comments and additions.

The methods can be grouped as:

- random
- pre-allocated
- mixed
- homogeneous
- self-selected
- formed through moving on

Random Groups

These are groups where the membership cannot be foreseen, and where participants know that group members are there by chance.

Random groups are especially good early in a workshop process. They mix people up in a manner which is usually quick, simple and fun. Most involve physical activity which wakes people up, and so leads in well to group discussions and other activities. Good also for the graveyard hour in the afternoon.

1. *Numbering*. Ask people to call out numbers in sequence up to the number of groups needed, and then to start again, until all have numbered. For example for 4 groups it goes: 1,2,3,4,1,2,3,4,1,2....etc. The ones then form one group, the twos another, and so on. This is the easiest and most common method. A variant is to number straight through, say 1 to 22, and then to stand divided as odds and evens, and then split each of these into two or three. This has the advantage of more movement, chaos and wake-up activity.

> *Plus*: quick, simple, random; mixes participants across seating groups; no preparation needed.
>
> *Minus:* no group identity.

2. *Number clumps*. Prepare four or more sets of numbers in groups which sum to the total number of participants. For example, with 15 participants:

2 of 5, 1 of 2, 1 of 3= 15
4 of 2, 1 of 3, 1 of 4= 15
1 of 4, 1 of 5, 1 of 6= 15
5 of 3= 15, where 5 of 3 is the desired final outcome.

Plus: active, fun.

Minus: needs preparation; needs improvisation if someone has gone to the loo; no group identity.

Tip: to handle last minute changes in numbers, make the last clump 1 of x (as above), and add or subtract from x in calling out the numbers.

3. *Alphabetical names*. People group by place of their names in the alphabet. Either ask them to form a circle, and then separate out groups; or simply let chaos reign having said the required group size.

Plus: active, fun, a good mixer for people on first meeting; people in groups use and learn others' first names, and then have a collective first-name identity.

Tip: (but not essential). Name cards put on beforehand with participants' preferred names.

4. *Jungle* (also known as *Fruit Salad*, *Vegetable Stew* etc.). All sit on chairs in a closed circle. You stand in centre. They name wild animals (or fruits, or vegetables, etc.) in sequence going round the circle. You limit the animal types to the number of groups desired, which are then repeated in sequence (eg. it might be "*Lion, tiger, elephant, monkey - lion, tiger, elephant, monkey - lion ...etc*"). Then when the person standing names an animal, all of that animal have to move. The person standing finds a seat, leaving someone else standing, who names another animal. For everyone to move, say "jungle".

Plus: random, very active, fun; moves furniture and clears a central space for work on the floor later, leaving chairs in a circle.

Tips: insist that everyone must move; if an animal is left out, get left in the centre yourself and name it; end on a 'jungle' leaving yourself in the centre to tell people to form their groups; limit the number of animals, fruits, or vegetables to four or at most five. People cannot usually remember more, and the more there are, the less activity there will be in changing seats; to form six, eight or ten groups, have three, four, or five jungle animals. After naming, divide half and half into female and male. Check everyone is clear. Proceed with jungle (lionesses and lions all move together), but at the end each animal forms two groups (lionesses and lions separate).

5. *Birthdays*. Participants form a circle by sequence of birthday. Proceed as for alphabetical names.

Plus: fun, can lead into identity by signs of the zodiac, reflections on seasonality and so on.

6. *Postcards or Jigsaws (random)*. Cut up as many postcards as groups to be formed, with one piece for each member. Jumble these up. Participants are each given or take one part, and then try to find

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their counterparts to make the picture.

Plus: fun, active, group can have the identity of whatever is on the card.

7. *Farmyard*. Write animal names to form groups on slips. Jumble them up. Hand them out or participants pick them up. Participants then act out their animal, both non-verbally and with animal noises, until they find each other. A variant is that for each animal there is a hunter/shepherd appointed for each animal, briefed outside the room, and then responsible for finding and gathering her/his animals.

Plus: fun, active, group has identity.

8. *Neighbours*. Ask participants to discuss with their neighbours where they are sitting, one-to-one, or in groups of threes, or at the tables where they have sat down.

Plus: good for buzzes; people often sit next to people they know and are comfortable with.

Minus: not fully random, and less of a mixer than other random methods.

Tip: With chairs without tables, encourage people each time to move their chairs so that they face each other. With threes, ask them to make an equilateral triangle. Moving chairs to face each other makes a big difference to the quality of quick buzzes.

Pre-Allocated Groups

These are groups where the individual composition of each group is decided in advance, with or without some consultation. Pre-allocated groups are useful where group composition and chemistry is really important, and especially if there are some difficult group members. Appropriate when prolonged group work is to follow. Groups for extended fieldwork are an example. Pre-allocation can assure an appropriate mix of disciplines, genders, experience and personality.

9. *Announce or Post up*. The easy, lazy and obvious way. Announce who will be in which group, or post up a list.

10. *Postcards or Jigsaws (planned)*. Cut up postcards or pictures as for (6) above. Write the names of participants on the back so that they will form pre-planned groups. Hand out carefully to each person. Participants then seek out cut outs that fit and form their groups.

Plus: for forming field teams this has the advantages of helping the team find itself through fun; and unselfconsciously giving each team an identity (the lions, the monkeys, the elephants...).

Tip: postcards of wild animals are good for team identities.

11. *Farmyard (planned)*. Write animals on slips as for (7) above. Write the names of participants on the back so that they will form pre-planned groups. Participants then act out their animal and flock together.

Mixed Groups

These are groups which contain a deliberate mix, specifying sorts of people to be in each group but not individually who those people should be. Mixed groups can ensure a range of points of view, and are more participatory than pre-allocated groups. They are useful for learning the points of views, knowledge, experience and skills of people from other backgrounds. The knowledge that people who are strangers, junior, young, female, etc. have been deliberately mixed tends to add to their voice and others' listening, especially if stated at the start as a reason for the grouping.

12. *Meet strangers.* Ask people to sit with others whom they have not met. This can be used when people come into a room, or at any stage when substantial numbers of people have still not met each other.

Plus: usually encourages people to introduce themselves, meet others.

Tip: best with small groups of two to four, with three usually a good number.

13. *Mix-it-yourself.* Give the desired mix and ask participants to form their own groups. For example:

- Gender Balance. Groups of 4 each to have two women and two men.
- Junior-Senior. Groups of 6 each to have two person from headquarters, two from field offices, and two from the front-line.
- Disciplinary Spread. Groups of 5 each to include at least one social anthropologist and one economist.

14. *Share the experts.* Ask those with special knowledge, experience or skill to raise their hands (eg. people who have managed and analysed a questionnaire survey, facilitated participatory mapping, done a cost-benefit analysis for real, etc.), and then others to cluster so that each group has one or more with that experience, which they can then share.

Plus: good for participatory sharing of knowledge, experience or skills.

15. *Take out the Talkers.* If a few people are dominant in groups, inhibiting others, ask them out of the groups for a special discussion or task. The smaller quieter groups left should then participate better. Those taken out can often make a good contribution in some other task or discussion.

Plus: used well this can help some of the more timid and junior to express themselves.

Homogeneous Groups

Homogeneous groups are often useful towards the end of workshops when people need to work out implications and action. They can also be a stage in analysis or negotiation, followed by intergroup presentations and discussions.

16. *Focus groups.* A focus group brings together people with similar characteristics eg. occupation, type of organisation, country or region or origin or experience, age, seniority, sex.

17. *Interest groups.* These are groups which come together through common stated interests or knowledge, for example those concerned with health, or agriculture, or credit etc.

Self-Grouping

Self-grouping is where choice is devolved to participants. Convene-your-own-group, and sign-up, are both good for groups which are to investigate different topics, since they allow each individual to express a preference.

18. *Pick a team.* This is common among children, for example picking a football team. Participatory, but can be invidious and hard on those picked last.

Tip: best used light-heartedly for games; speed the selection to minimise embarrassment.

19. *Convene your own group.* Participants are asked about topics they wish to work on. Those with ideas announce them and seek recruits. Others choose which group to join.

Plus: allows the expression of strong preferences and leadership; gives a range of choice; good for choosing topics for fieldwork.

Minus: Can mean that an important topic is not covered if under-subscribed.

20. *Sign up.* As for (19), but participants write their names up on a board to show their options.

Plus: less publicly face-to-face than (19); gives more time for the choice.

Move On

Finally, a method which crosscuts the various types. To mix up groups which are already formed.

21. *Move on.* Ask one or more person from each group to move on to a new group, either together or splitting up as they go. Those to move can variously be:

- self-chosen (giving those who wish a chance to move)
- designated to be random (eg. names earliest or latest in the alphabet)
- specified (eg. skill- or knowledge-related as if the experts in share-the-experts all move to new groups)
- whoever is talking most (which makes this a joke, and the new group is warned!).
- involve everyone in turn, one or two at a time, through a series of changes

So second, third etc. rounds of movement can be made. (The Margolis wheel is a special case of move-on). Move-on is, I think, rather underused.

Plus: can be used to reduce dominance by a few talkers; help participants to get to know more people; enable a few experts to share their knowledge by rotating around groups.

Minus: can disturb a group which is getting on well. A group may also not wish to lose its main talker!

May I request and challenge anyone who sees this to add to and amend the list, and to write to *RRA Notes* with ideas and experiences. I will then try to send you an updated version.

26. TWENTY-ONE TIPS FOR SHORT PRA WORKSHOPS WITH LOTS OF PEOPLE

Robert Chambers
Institute of Development Studies
University of Sussex, Falmer
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One sort of PRA workshop can be for quite large numbers of people for a short time, such as a long afternoon, or one or two days. This can make sense:

- to familiarise officials, academics, people trapped in universities, cities and training centres etc., with some of the elements and methods of PRA;
- to enable a few people who already have the orientation to go off and get on with it;
- to bring together people who are interested in PRA so that they meet one another, and perhaps follow up together.

It is possible to conduct these 'dry' workshops with almost any number of people. The most to date is 180, and numbers over 60 have been quite common. Being prepared for any number of participants encourages hosts to invite others, from other organisations as well as their own, with a better hope of sharing and later networking. It is different with field experience workshops where numbers may have to be limited quite strictly, although even there the gains from extra participants, in my view, often exceed the costs.

To make such a big one or two-day workshop participatory and a full learning experience, I suggest the following twenty-one tips:

1. *Choosing a room.* A large room with plenty of space (but not so big that a microphone is needed), and with lots of walls that can be used for sticking up flipchart sheets.

2. *Preparing the room.* Set it up the night before, or well in advance. If you rearrange seating, plaster the place with notices asking janitors to please NOT put the chairs back in line....

3. *Arrange seating informally.* For large numbers, chairs without tables are often best, in a muddled-up U shape. Or lots of small tables for small groups, especially threes. Never have a table between you and the participants. Sit undefended. Try to end on the floor (but not on your back!).

4. *Expectations/hopes.* Ask someone to intercept people as they arrive and invite them to write their hopes/expectations and post these up. Read them, and read out a few at the start. If necessary, change the balance of the programme.

5. *Programme contract.* Discuss how long people can stay, and the programme and agree (but only if necessary) to finish by a certain time. With a large group the easiest way to do this is by a show of hands for alternative finishing times. Videos can be optional extras outside the basic session times, eg. in an evening, for those who wish or can stay on.

6. *Introductions.* Individual introductions can take too long in a large group, unless everyone is strictly name and organisation. A quick method is to ask *"Who are we?"* with handraising

for type of organisation, discipline/profession, countries or continents of origin or experience, etc. Ask people to look around for people they may want to talk to later. Ask: *"Who has been left out?"*. This gets everyone physically active early on, and most people find it really interesting to know the mix of professions etc. Usually there are a few laughs about those left out. Circulate a sheet for names and addresses with one person responsible for seeing that it gets round, and have it typed and distributed by the end.

7. *Alternate plenary and small groups*. Say at the outset that you will never talk for more than 10 minutes, and that after talking there will be buzzes so that everyone can discuss with neighbours what has just gone on. Plenary feedback is not always necessary from these quick buzzes, which can be anything from 20 seconds to five or even 10 minutes. These quick buzzes have several advantages - maintaining interest, encouraging active listening, allowing everyone to participate, and giving you a breather, a chance to regroup, and an opportunity to listen to what people are saying.

8. *Identify and make use of experience in the group*. Ask, for example, *"Who here has experience of RRA or PRA? Or of other participatory approaches?"* The same can be asked about rural development tourism, questionnaire surveys etc. Then welcome the experience as a resource for the whole group. In buzzes, try to ensure that those with experience are well distributed so that all can benefit. This can be done easily by raising hands, and then forming groups around those with their hands up.

   Also, whenever a topic comes up (eg. participatory mapping) ask if anyone has facilitated it, and if they have, ask them to share their experience. This can help enormously.

9. *Can you guess it?* Have mystery problems or slides, where you put up a sum of money and give people 10 questions to guess something. The lesson is that people know things we do not.

10. *Rapid group analysis*. Give groups quick tasks of analysis to write and post up on flipchart papers. Three examples:

    - semi-structured interviewing - dos and don'ts
    - advantages and problems of groups
    - participatory mapping: ground or paper? Advantages of each.

Then all participants stand and read the charts, and list key points their group did not get. A few can be specially mentioned.

11. *Vary feedback methods*. I have only gradually realised the range of ways for analysis, sharing analysis, and feedback. Various sequences can combine some of these:

    - Individuals speak, nothing written up (Mark I participation)
    - Before discussion, each participant makes a personal list
    - Individuals speak, remarks written up by facilitator
    - Groups discuss either same topic or different topic
    - Groups speak in turn, nothing written up
    - Groups speak in turn, remarks written up by facilitator
    - Small groups coalesce and compare notes
    - Groups send representatives to write on flipchart sheets simultaneously
    - Each group does its own flipchart (often best on the ground) and sticks it up

all stand, read, note, reflect on what has been put up.

12. *Run variable activities into the breaks.* When there is an activity which groups will finish at different times, run it into a break for tea/coffee/lunch etc. This can save time, pressurising only the very keen or slow coaches.

13. *Instant plenary 'research'.* Show how with a group it is possible to elicit quantitative information of high quality quickly. This can be done by handraising, by secret ballot, or by lining up (eg. for seasonality of conception by making a circle with large cards for months and asking everyone to stand behind their month of birth).

14. *Vary group sizes and compositions*[1]. This is much more of a skill than I used to realise. There must be lots of ways of doing it. I now tend to start with threes, amalgamate to sixes by putting tables together for group exercise, and then via *Fruit Salad* or *Jungle* get all tables to the walls, with random groups. For some purposes though, groups who know one another or who have common knowledge and interests are best. This may apply for example with matrix scoring, where it can save the groups time deciding what to do, and make it easier for all to participate. My general experience is that groups should be mixed up periodically, although some people who happen to be especially happy with their groups may not wish this.

15. *Warn in advance.* Tell people what the next practical is going to be, explaining the relevance of the build up to it (eg. for slides of behaviour/attitudes before non-verbals, or for slides of participatory mapping before the group question: ground or paper, or slides of methods before dry practicals).

16. *Unfreezing sequences.* Start informally, and keep shifting towards greater informality in group interactions. I usually try to get to the non-verbals exercise by the end of the first morning. This can be quite hard work with proper men and women. I am sure there are many ways of doing this. I try to get in these participatory unfreezes:

- Expectations
- Who are we?
- Introduce yourself to your neighbours (pre-buzz)
- Rural development tourism: sharing your experience
- Questionnaire surveys: sharing experience, flipcharts of problems (at this stage, groups often amalgamate)
- Can you guess it?
- How we see things
- Buzzes on behaviour as we watch contrasting slides
- Jungle (fruit salad) (involves clearing the centre of the room)
- Non-verbals (fairly dramatic unfreezer for some)

This leaves the room in decent chaos with a clear middle area for the afternoon. I realize that I am in danger of freezing on my own sequence. Perhaps I need shaking up! (see Tip 21).

17. *Dry run exercises.* (not always so dry either). There is a dilemma between rapid and slow. Rapid is fine for instant mapping of one's own neighbourhood (two minutes is enough), but for group exercises - matrix scoring, imaginary mapping and modelling, trend and change

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[1]See Robert Chambers' paper: "*Twenty-One Ways of Forming Groups*", no. 26 in this issue, for further ideas and definitions of terms.

analysis, time use analysis, seasonal calendars, chapati diagramming etc. it is possible to put on strong time pressure so that groups draw and diagram in a matter of minutes - as little as ten minutes for some methods. People later complain about shortage of time but also comment that they did want a taste of all of them. Matrix scoring needs longer, but time can be shortened by suggesting one topic (eg. development organisations), which also makes comparisons easy and interesting, while leaving it to groups to do something else if they wish.

Go outside and do it on the ground if possible.

For dry runs - chalks, seeds (several sorts), flip chart papers, pens, scissors, cellotape or masking tape are useful (with bluetack or gum as optional extras).

18. *Use wall posters.* Wall posters are better than overheads. They stay there. You can discuss some points but leave others which are self-explanatory. They can be copied out at leisure by participants if they wish. Wallposters with photographs can make a big impression.

19. *List and avoid common mistakes.* We all make boobs, and have bad habits. Make your own personal list. Those I am at least dimly aware of include:

- Losing my cool with people before we start (especially criticising the convenors for the terrible room, hopeless tables, medieval slide projector, grotty OHP, inadequate screen, lack of wall space, horrible chalk, useless blackboard, curtains that don't black out.....you name it);
- Showing too many slides (limit them, have a purpose);
- Talking for more than 10 minutes at a time;
- Showing too much material on overheads;
- Letting a big talker talk big to the annoyance of others (solution: save your speech for the relevant buzz);
- Taking too long in the early stages of the day;
- Including too many practicals at the cost of reflection and discussion;
- Trying to make the breaks (coffee, tea etc.) too short;
- Mumbling;
- Preaching;
- Manic impatience, waving arms, tearing hair;
- Not allowing time for questions to be raised.

20. *Evaluation.* Given shortage of time (usually) four questions written up, and participants scribble replies anonymously:

- Were your expectations achieved?
- What did you find most useful?
- What did you find least useful?
- How could a workshop like this be improved?

21. *Invent, experiment.* Every time, try something new. And fail forwards.

ENDNOTES

1. **Rodale's *International Ag-Sieve*** is a bi-monthly collection of gleanings of the latest and most applicable information in the field of sustainable agriculture in the Tropics. Written for people working in the field in the developing world, the *Ag-Sieve* contains the technical information that the scientific community needs, and the practical information the field worker can use but does not require a PhD or dictionary to understand.

   It links the work of the major agricultural centres, the insights of the farmer, the experience of the multi-disciplinary development team, and the individual researcher into an eight-page newsletter that highlights breakthroughs in sustainable agriculture. Our audience functions as an Information Exchange Network. Readers contribute information to the newsletter and also benefit from our reader information service.

   Recent thematic issues cover the latest in tropical forest products, training opportunities in sustainable ag, seeds and biodiversity. Coming up are issues dealing with urban gardening and vegetable systems, women in agriculture and agroforestry.

   For a free copy, write to: **International *Ag-Sieve*, Rodale Institute, 611 Siegfriedale Road, Kutztown, PA 19530, USA**

   Fax: 215/683-8548
   US $ 18 ($33 for 2 years)
   A bound set of back issues: US $24

   For readers interested in regenerative agriculture in West Africa, *Entre Nous* is published in French by Rodale International. Contact: Rodale International, BP A237, Thiés, Sénégal.

2. **Call for Articles**: A reminder to all readers about three upcoming special issues for which we would greatly welcome experiences and reflections from the field:

   - ***RRA Notes Special Issue on Children***

   - ***Special issue on PRA and Gender***, following the workshop held at IDS in December 1993.

   - ***Special issue on PRA methods and techniques for use in urban areas.*** As a result of many requests from readers, IIED's Human Settlements Programme is collaborating with the Sustainable Agriculture Programme to prepare a special issue of *RRA Notes* on the use of participatory inquiry in urban areas. We invite groups and individuals using participatory research and development approaches in urban areas to send us papers describing and analysing their experiences.

   We hope to compile a broad range of experiences and insights. There is such a variety of ways in which different countries distinguish between rural and urban areas that what are considered rural villages in some countries may be small urban centres in others. We plan to include papers on the particular application of PRA in 'large' villages which have many characteristics associated with urban areas (for instance several thousand people living in a relatively concentrated settlement).

Please send us papers about the different methods and techniques you have used, what has worked and what has not, what have been the problems and successes. We will reprint articles that have been published elsewhere, if those who hold the copyright permit this. Note that *RRA Notes* is an informal publication. Articles can include drawings, maps and diagrams of work undertaken. The length of articles should be between 1,000 to 5,000 words. We have some funding for translation costs and would be delighted to receive articles in French and Spanish. In addition to sending the special issue to all those who currently receive RRA Notes, we also intend sending copies to subscribers of *Environment and Urbanization*.

3. **Clark University Publications:** The following is a list of recent publications from the *Program for International Development* at Clark University:

■ *Managing Resources with PRA Partnerships: A Case Study of Lesoma, Botswana.* September 1993. English and Setswana editions available.

■ *Gender, Class, Ecological Decline, and Livelihood Strategies: A Case Study of Siquijor Island, The Philippines.* Ecogen Case Study Series, March, 1993.

■ *Pockets of Poverty: Linking Water, Health, and Gender-Based Responsibilities in South Kamwango [Kenya].* Ecogen Case Study Series.

■ *Introduction to PRA for Rural Resources Management.* Spanish, Setswana, Kiswahili, Somali and Malagash versions.

All the above can be obtained from: Director, Program for International Development, Clark University, 950 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01610-1477, USA.

4. **Recent PRA-Related Publications from the Drylands Programme at IIED.**

■ *RELAIS MARP Numéro 01.* Bulletin de liaison et d'échanges d'informations sur la Méthode Active de Recherche et de Planification Participatives.

■ *Rapport de l'Atelier Régional de Formation de Formateurs sur la Méthode Accélérée de Recherche Participative, Dakar, Sénégal, du 11 au 23 mai 1993.*

■ *OXFAM Initie ses Partenaires à la Méthode Accélérée de Recherche Participative: Rapport de l'Atelier Organisé à Ségou, Mali, du 14 au 23 juin 1993.*

All these publications are edited by Mamadou Bara Guèye, and can be obtained from Nicole Kenton, Drylands Programme, IIED, 3 Endsleigh Street, London WC1H 0DD. Cost: £8.00 each.

5. **Bangladesh PRA Network.** In September 1993, this network produced its first newsletter, as an experiment to see whether it would be a useful contribution to PRA users. The idea is to share PRA experiences, anecdotes and notes, and calls for all PRA practitioners to contribute. This first issue includes an article on the dangers of using artist-drawn pictures for communicating with farmers without field-testing them first. The PRA Network is holding (or has already held) a series of monthly meetings in 1994. The programme is as follows:

January 31	What if community desires conflict with developmental/environmental priorities. What are the limits of intervention?
February 28	Urban applications (re-defining the "R" of PRA)
March 28	Preventing PRA becoming mechanical/routinised. Quality control of PRA
April 25	Different applications of mapping
May 30	Is PRA too rapid to ensure real assessment of the community's knowledge?
June 27	Who are the best informants?

The contact for the network is Aroma Goon, PACT, House 56, Road 16 (New) 27 (Old), Dhanmondi, Dhaka 1209, Bangladesh. Fax: 880-2-813416

Another contact is Dee Jupp, of SHOGORIP, 5/4 Iqbal Road, Block A, Mohammedpur, Dhaka 1207, Bangladesh.

6. **Recent Publication.** Mukherjee, Neela. 1993. *Participatory Rural Appraisal. Methodology and Applications*. Studies in Rural Participation - 1. Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi. 160 pages. ISBN 81-7022-473-X. Available in India for Rs 200.

   This book is an important contribution to the emerging wealth of participatory methods in rural situations. It is divided into four chapters. The first chapter provides a short introduction to the logic of participation and the methodology of PRA, its significance, principles, foundations, kinds and origin. The second chapter analyses the indigenous knowledge-sources and touches upon the sequencing of methods to illustrate its significance for in-depth analysis of rural issues. The third chapter describes applications of PRA in understanding poverty, wealth, ecology, gender and health. Finally the fourth chapter illustrates some policy measures flowing from such applications, discusses the limitations posed to the use of PRA and the opportunities which PRA offers as a participatory methodology.

   What is particularly valuable is the drawing on a wide range of examples from different countries. This gives substance to the debates on participation, its values and limitations. This book is neither a handbook nor a cookbook. But it will give new insights to trainers and practitioners worldwide.

   It is available from bookshops, or directly from the Concept Publishing Company, A/15-16, Commercial Block, Mohan Garden, New Delhi: 110059 (Tel: 5554042/5504042)

   Review by Jules Pretty

7. **Two recent Masters theses employing PRA research techniques** in Indonesia have been completed at the University of Waterloo's Faculty of Environmental Studies, based on fieldwork associated with the Bali Sustainable Development Project (BSDP). The BSDP is a research project linking the University of Waterloo with Universitas Gajah Mada (Yogyakarta, Java) and Universitas Udayana (Denpasar, Bali).

■ *From Tea Makers to Decision Makers: Applying Participatory Rural Appraisal to Gender and Development in Rural Bali, Indonesia.* Sara Kindon.

■ *Farmers Ain't No Fools: Exploring the Role of Participatory Rural Appraisal to Access Indigenous Knowledge and Enhance Sustainable Development and Research Planning. A Case Study of Dusun Pausan, Bali, Indonesia.* Trevor Wickham.

Both theses will soon be available at cost through the University Consortium on the Environment's Student Paper Series, c/o Drew Knight, Faculty of Environmental Studies, University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 3G1.

8. **Forthcoming Guides from IIED**: Two guides are in preparation which will be published in the course of 1994. These are:

■ *A Trainers' Guide for Participatory Inquiry*
■ *A Users' Guide for Participatory Inquiry*

These will be cheaply available, fully illustrated, and draw on the experience of trainers and practitioners worldwide.

9. **Gandhigram Rural Institute Participatory Rural Appraisal Project.**

The Gandhigram Rural Institute has recently produced a report of a PRA workshop organised to understand the recurring problem of sand dune encroachment in a Western Ghat village in south India. *"Sand Over the Soil: PRA Approach for Sorting out an Incessant Agricultural Problem in a Western Ghat Village"* describes how a two-day PRA successfully identified the underlying causes of the problem. Time lines and group discussions revealed how the sand encroachment started in the 1940s, following widespread deforestation of the Western Ghats. A government scheme in the mid-1960s planted trees to bind the sand and act as windbreaks. These trees were often planted on private farmland and 225 people were appointed as paid 'watchers' to prevent people from them. However, with the cessation of the scheme in 1988, the watchers were no longer paid, and the trees were rapidly felled. The recent decrease in rainfall and subsequent drop in ground water level was attributed to the loss of tree cover. Farmers had to shift their fields to the less fertile western side of the village, despite the threat of sand encroachment. Consequently since the 1940s, 80 per cent of arable land has been taken out of production.

Walked transects in the surrounding agricultural land revealed another issue. A percolation pond formerly used by the whole village had silted up and was being farmed by only a few farmers. Villagers blamed this for the drying up of more than 90 per cent of wells in the vicinity of the pond.

During the plenary session at the end of the workshop, the facilitators found it a struggle to wean the villagers away from a "dependency syndrome" to one of voluntary participation where they came up with their own solutions. However villagers did make a number of suggestions, including:

- planting trees of economic importance on private land; the landowners would be responsible for the trees' well-being, as well as being allowed to reap the benefits; and

- holding discussions with the occupants of the pond land to persuade them to vacate it, and establishing a people's committee to restore the pond.

For further details of this report, and of the work of the Gandhigram Rural Institute, contact: Dr N. Narayansamy, Gandhigram Rural Institute, Gandhigram 624302, Dindigul Anna District, Tamil Nadu, India.

Review by Fiona Hinchcliffe

11. **MA/Postgraduate Diploma in Community Drama for Development.** This one year course, validated by the University of Southampton, integrates community drama practices with cultural studies and development theory, culminating in a major practical project undertaken in the UK or overseas. It offers students training as facilitators of cultural strategies in communication and community participation in evolving and sustaining criteria for development. The course is taught by specialists with substantial theoretical and practical experiences in various parts of the world in the fields of community drama, cultural studies and development theory and practice. It is directed at the needs of development agencies working in the UK and overseas. So far, it is the first course in Europe that offers an advanced forum for students from the North and South to jointly evolve the use of community drama as a tool for development in local and global contexts.

For details, write to: The Admissions Officer, King Alfred's College, Sparkford Road, Winchester, Hampshire, SO22 4NR, Great Britain.

Fax: (0962) 842280

12. **Letter from Grindl Dockery, Liverpool:**
"For some time now I have been meaning to write to you about several matters pertaining to Rapid Appraisal (RA). I have referred many students to you and RRA Notes in the course of teaching RA, mainly at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. I have been training NHS health workers, engineers working overseas and international students on how to carry out a RA for doing a needs assessment. Over the course of time, there have been pertinent questions asked by students and myself as to the correct definition of different terms, which appear to be used by RA practitioners and authors of articles on the subject. For those new to the field it has appeared to cause some confusion and uncertainty and I will list them accordingly.

1. Why is it still referred to as RRA, emphasis on the rural, when it is applied now in different contexts ie, urban, refugee, disaster etc.? People have felt this implies that it is a research approach only for rural areas. This is why I use the term Rapid Appraisal (RA) so that the focus is on the process, rather than the context, which may be other than rural.

2. There have been questions raised about the differences between Rapid Assessment Procedures (RAP) and RA. If one is to base their reply on the material published by Hurtado and Scrimshaw, is this limiting the interpretation to the individual's point of view and therefore, not necessarily correct or inhibiting the broader concept of such approaches?

3. Is it not possible to standardise terms where possible, without inhibiting spontaneity and innovation? Perhaps authors should clarify what they mean when using certain terminology? One case in point is the use of PRA, which I would define as Participatory Rural Appraisal,

applicable to whatever context in which the RA process may be used, rather than refer to the term Rural. This again implies that participation may occur in rural areas, whereas it is not something to be emphasised in all contexts where the RA process is being used.

4. Another point is the use of the term "Rapid" which in my experience has prompted negative comments such as "Oh, that quick and dirty method". For many of us committed to the principle of participation, it is apparent that it is not a rapid process, but involves a much longer term commitment of time and resources. My suggestion would be to change the term "rapid" to "community" and therefore, refer to the process of Community Appraisal (CA). Within this concept the different types of RA may be further defined, including the methods that may be used in the process.

5. In discussion with other researchers, mainly conventional, there have been comments made that the RRA case studies presented in the Notes, focus on the actual RA survey carried out with very little about what happens after completion of the RA survey. I must agree in part, although I am as much at fault by emphasising the RA survey process itself more than how that process continues after the actual survey. This has been highlighted further by students asking what they do after the survey is completed and how they use the information to make changes or implement new initiatives.

These points may have already been discussed/debated in RA circles and I am only repeating what is already recognised. As I am increasingly being asked to assist NHS personnel carry out Needs Assessment surveys, it is apparent that RA has a lot to offer within the Western context. It is likely that demands for information on the RA process to be made more widely available will arise. I have already had requests to make training material on RA available to health managers and other interested personnel.

If the application of the RA process and methods are to be better understood by a growing audience from different contexts, the need for a more open and wider discussion within both the formal and informal sectors is necessary".

13. Letter from Claus Euler, Enfants du Monde, Bangladesh:

"During recent field trips I tried several different methods. After a very successful orientation workshop my colleagues are eager to try something themselves. I will see the results at the end of the month, when everyone will be back.

During my trip to the north-west I did a matrix of both the best times to meet women and men (separate matrices were giving different results for the two women and the one men groups, where the two women groups were more similar to each other). I compared this with the working hours of the government staff, which showed the expected result that during the best time of day (between 1 and 3pm for the women) the staff have a lunch break. A lot of second, third and fourth priorities were either before the office opening hours (10am) or after 4pm, which is a clear indicator that we are often visiting at inconvenient times".

***RRA Notes* 1: June 1988**

1. RRA Methods Workshop in Thailand - *Jules Pretty*
2. Notes of an RRA Meeting held in Sussex - *Robert Chambers*
3. Pairwise Ranking in Ethiopia - *Gordon Conway*
4. Direct Matrix Ranking in Kenya and West Bengal - *Robert Chambers*
5. Recent Publications - *Jennifer McCracken*

***RRA Notes* 2: October 1988**

1. Using RRA to Formulate a Village Resources Management Plan, Mbusanyi, Kenya - Charity Kabutha & Richard Ford
2. Learning About Wealth: An example from Zimbabwe - Ian Scoones
3. Investigating Poverty: An example from Tanzania - Sheila Smith & John Sender

***RRA Notes* 3: December 1988**

1. Ranking of Browse Species by Cattlekeepers in Nigeria - *Wolfgang Bayer*
2. Direct Matrix Ranking in Papua New Guinea - *Robin Mearns*
3. Sustainability Analysis - *Iain Craig*
4. Oral Histories and Local Calendars - *Robin Mearns*
5. Portraits and Stories - *Jules Pretty*
6. Bibliographic Notes

***RRA Notes* 4: February 1989**

1. Wealth Ranking in a Caste Area of India - Ruth Grosvenor-Alsop
2. Popular Theatre through Video in Costa Rica - Keith Anderson
3. Participatory RRA in Gujarat - Jennifer McCracken
4. Successful Networking!

***RRA Notes* 5: May 1989**

1. Letter to the Editor - *Barbara Grandin*
2. The "Fertiliser Bush" Game: A Participatory Means of Communication - *Kristin Cashman*
3. Rapid Appraisal for Fuelwood Planning in Nepal - *John Soussan*
4. Rapid Food Security Assessment: A Pilot Exercise in Sudan - *Simon Maxwell*
5. RRA Has a Role to Play in Developed Countries - *Peter Ampt & Raymond Ison*

***RRA Notes* 6: June 1989**

1. Rapid Assessment of Artisanal Systems: A Case Study of Rural Carpentry Enterprises in Zimbabwe - *Godfrey Cromwell*
2. The Rural Rides of William Cobbett: RRA and Sustainable Agriculture in 1820s - *Jules Pretty*

RRA Notes 6 cont..

3. A Note on the Use of Aerial Photographs for Land Use Planning on a Settlement Site in Ethiopia - *Dick Sandford*
4. Using Rapid Rural Appraisal for Project Identification: Report on a training exercise in Jama' are Local Government Area, Bauchi State, Northern Nigeria - *Michael Hubbard, Robert Leurs & Andrew Nickson*
5. Visualising Group Discussions with Impromptu Cartoons - *Ueli Scheuermeier*
6. The Use of Community Theatre in Project Evaluation: An Experiment from Zimbabwe - *Andrea Cornwall, Mathou Chakavanda, Simbisai Makumbirofa, Guilter Shumba & Abraham Mawere*

***RRA Notes* 7: September 1989**

SPECIAL ISSUE OF PROCEEDINGS OF SECOND JOINT IDS/IIED RRA REVIEW WORKSHOP, SUSSEX, ENGLAND.

Includes summaries of presented papers on topics of diagrams, aerial photographs, interviews and groups, ranking, health, participatory approaches, and monitoring and evaluation (Papers by *Jules Pretty, Ruth Alsop, Ueli Scheuermeier, Robert Leurs, Peter Dewees, Robin Mearns, Howard Jones, Anne Floquet, Ian Scoones, Miranda Munro, Susan Rifkin and Hugh Annet, Pauline Ong, John Thompson & Peter Veit, Jennifer McCracken, David Potten & Mike Howes*). Also includes notes on discussions of these topics, plus the ideology of RRA, the dangers of RRA, training in RRA, and the future of RRA.

***RRA Notes* 8: January 1990**

1. Nutrition and RRA - *Judith Appleton*
2. The Use of Wealth Ranking in Nutrition Surveys in Sudan - *Helen Young*
3. The Role of Community Participants in RRA Methods in Ethiopia - *Dessalegn Debebe*
4. Attitudes to Income-Earning Opportunities: Report of a Ranking Exercise in Ethiopia - *Simon Maxwell*
5. Economic Classification of a Community Using Locally Generated Criteria - *Parmesh Shah*
6. Publications: Manuals and Guidelines - *Jennifer McCracken*

***RRA Notes* 9: August 1990**

1. Wealth Ranking: A Method to Identify the Poorest - Verona Groverman
2. Rapid Rural Appraisal: Lessons Learnt from Experiences in the Philippines - Victoria Ortega-Espaldon & Leonardo Florece
3. Some Techniques for Rapid Rural Appraisal of Artisanal Infrastructures - Godfrey Cromwell
4. Hearing Aids for Interviewing - John Mitchell and Hugo Slim
5. Participatory Rural Appraisal: Is it Culturally Neutral? Thoughts from a PRA in Guinea-Bissau - Weyman Fussell

***RRA Notes* 10: February 1991**

1. Farmer Participation on On-Farm Varietal Trials: Multilocational Testing under Resource Poor Conditions - *The women of Sangams, Pastapur & Michel Pimbert*

RRA Notes **10 cont..**

2. Rural Development in the Highlands of North America: The Highlander Economic Education Project - *John Gaventa & Helen Lewis*
3. Assessing Women's Needs in Gaza Using Participatory Rapid Appraisal Techniques - *Heather Grady, Amal Abu Daqqa, Fadwa Hassanein, Fatma Soboh, Itimad Muhana, Maysoon Louzon, Noha el-Beheisi, Rawhiya Fayyad, Salwa el-Tibi and Joachim Theis*
4. The Bias of Interviewing - *John Mitchell & Hugo Slim*
5. The Outsider Effect - *Ueli Scheuermeier*
6. Focusing Formal Surveys in Thailand: A Use for Rapid Rural Appraisal - *Karen Ehlers and Christine Martins*

***RRA Notes* 11: May 1991**

SPECIAL ISSUE: PROCEEDINGS OF JOINT IIED AND DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION GROUP (UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM), LOCAL LEVEL ADAPTIVE PLANNING WORKSHOP, LONDON.

Includes a summary of workshop presentations and discussions (Jules Pretty and Ian Scoones) and 15 individual papers covering five thematic areas, namely: A Critique of Landuse Planning (Barry Dalal-Clayton, Adrian Wood); Applications of Participatory Planning Approaches (Tony Gibson, Margie Buchanan Smith and Susanna Davies, Chris Roche, Melissa Leach); Institutionalising Local Level Planning (Donald Curtis, Robin Grimble, Martin Adams, Mary Tiffin, Henri Roggeri, Robert Leurs, Mal Jumare, A Andeley and S Ogede); Governments and NGOs Linkages (Kate Wellard, Tony Bebbington); and Organisational and Management Issues (Alan Fowler).

***RRA Notes* 12: July 1991**

1. Some Advantages to Having an Outsider on the Team - *Don Messerschmidt*
2. Revolutionary Rural Appraisal - *Susan Johnson*
3. Participatory Mapping and Modelling: User's Notes - *James Mascarenhas & P D Prem Kumar*
4. Rapid Appraisal for Women in the North West Frontier of Pakistan - *Mehreen Hosain*
5. Harvesting Local Forestry Knowledge: A Comparison of RRA and Conventional Surveys - *Andy Inglis*
6. Beyond Chapatis - *Mick Howes*
7. Topical Surveys as a Tool for a More Dynamic Farmer-Extension Worker Relationship - *Antony van der Loo*
8. Endnotes

***RRA Notes* 13: August 1991**

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FEBRUARY 1991 BANGALORE PRA TRAINERS' WORKSHOP, IIED/MYRADA. Edited by James Mascarenhas, Parmesh Shah, Sam Joseph, Ravi Jayakaran, John Devavaram, Vidya Ramachandran, Aloysius Fernandez, Robert Chambers and Jules Pretty

Overview of PRA in India: Review and Future Directions - James Mascarenhas, Parmesh Shah, Sam Joseph, Ravi Jayakaran, John Devavaram, Vidya Ramachandran, Aloysius Fernandez, Robert Chambers and Jules Pretty

RRA Notes **13 contd...**

1. PRA and Participatory Learning Methods: Recent Experiences from MYRADA and South India - James Mascarenhas
2. Sharing our Limited Experience for Trainers - *Aloysius Fernandez, James Mascarenhas and Vidya Ramachandran*
3. Participatory Rural Appraisal and Planning (PRAP): The Experience of AKRSP - *Parmesh Shah, Girish Bharadwaj and Ranjit Ambastha*
4. Farmers as Analysts and Facilitators in Participatory Rural Appraisal and Planning - *Parmesh Shah, Girish Bharadwaj and Ranjit Ambastha*
5. PRA in Malda District, West Bengal: Report of a Training Workshop for ActionAid India and Tagore Society for Rural Development - *Thomas Joseph and Sam Joseph*
6. PRA for Rural Resource Management - *John Devavaram, Ms Nalini, J. Vimalnathan, Abdul Sukkar, Krishnan, A P Mayandi and Karunanidhi*
7. Anantapur Experiment in PRA Training - *Somesh Kumar*
8. PRA Camp at Mahilong, Bihar: Krishi Gram Vikas Kendra - *Ravi Jayakaran*
9. Wealth Ranking in Mahilong, Bihar - *Anup Sarkar*
10. PRA Approach and Strategy: the HIDA/MYRADA Agroforestry Programme in Andhra Pradesh - *Eva Robinson*
11. Participatory Impact Monitoring of a Soil and Water Conservation Programme by Farmers, Extension Volunteers and AKRSP - *Parmesh Shah, Girish Bharadwaj and Ranjit Ambastha*
12. PRA: A Brief Note on ActionAid's Experience - *Sam Joseph*
13. MYRADA Kamasamudram Project: A Brief Report - *A L Shivaraja, Rajendra Prasad, T G Bhat, Anjaneya Reddy, Amarnatha Jadav and Benedicta Cutinha*

RRA Notes **14: December 1991**

1. But How Does It Compare With the REAL Data? - *Gerard J. Gill*
2. RRA and the Analysis of Difference - *Alice Welbourn*
3. Participatory Modelling in North Omo, Ethiopia: Investigating the Perceptions of Different Groups through Models - *Ejigu Jonfa, Haile Mariam Tebeje, Tadesse Dessalegn, Hailu Halala and Andrea Cornwall*
4. Shoulder Tapping: A Technique of Training in Participatory Rural Appraisal - *Anil Shah*
5. "Pass on the Pen" Approach: Identifying the Poorest of the Poor Families - *K Chandramouli*
6. The Use of the School Essay as an RRA Technique: A Case Study from Bong County, Liberia - *Jennifer A Sutton and Blair D Orr*
7. Methodological Notes on Exploring Indigenous Knowledge and Management of Crop Health - *James Fairhead*
8. The Thippapur Experience: A PRA Diary - *Somesh Kumar and A Santhi Kumari*
9. RRA Notes Readership Survey - *The Editors*
10. Endnotes

RRA Notes **15: May 1992**

1. The Elusive Poor: A Wealth of Ways to Find Them. Report on IDS/IIED Seminar on Wealth and Well-Being Ranking - *Irene Guijt*

RRA Notes **15 contd...**

2. Wealth Ranking in the Gambia: Which Households Participated in the FITT Programme? - *Marie-Therese Sarch*
3. Villagers' Perceptions of Rural Poverty Through the Mapping Methods of PRA - *Neela Mukherjee*
4. The "Beans-Game" - Experiences with a Variation of Wealth Ranking in the Kivu Region, Eastern Zaire - *Stefanie S Schaefer*
5. Direct and Indirect Uses of Wealth Ranking in Mongolia - *Robin Mearns, D. Shombodon, G. Narangerel, U. Turul, A. Enkhamgalan, B. Myagmarzhav, A. Bayanjargal and B. Bekhsuren*
6. Finding the Poorest in a Tamil Nadu Village: A Sequence of Mapping and Wealth Ranking -*Jules Pretty, S. Subramanian, N. Kempu Chetty, D. Ananthakrishnan, C. Jayanthi, S. Muralikrishnasamy and K. Renganayaki*
7. A Simple Method for Scoring Housing Conditions as Income Proxy in Ethiopia - *Mauro Ghirotti*
8. FARMI's Experiences of Wealth Ranking in the Philippines: Different Farmers Have Different Needs - *F.T. Banlina and Ly Tung*
9. Cultural Sensitivities on the Rapid Appraisal Team - *Donald A. Messerschmidt*
10. Interviewing Cows - *Kassaye Hadgu, Mohammed Yisehak and Girmay Tekle*
11. An Architect from a Different School - *Ranjit Ambastha and Meera Shah*
12. Together get a Grip on the Future: RRA in the Emmental of Switzerland - *Ueli Scheuermeier and Raymond Ison*
13. A User's Note on Wealth Ranking by Cards and List of Sources on Wealth Ranking - *Irene Guijt*
14. NEW!!!! Tips for Trainers: Fruit Salad
15. Endnotes

***RRA Notes* 16: July 1992**

Editorial - *Alice Welbourn (Guest Editor)*

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1. Rapid Appraisal for Health: An Overview - *Susan Rifkin*
2. Participatory Rural Appraisal: Potential Applications in Family Planning, Health and Nutrition Programmes - *Richard Heaver*

Discussions with Communities

3. Qualitative Methods for Assessing the Acceptability of Immunization in Somalia - *Anne LaFond*
4. Unemployment and Health: the Development of the Use of PRA in Identified Communities in Staveley, North Derbyshire - *Teresa Cresswell*
5. Community-based Information Systems - *Francesca Moneti*

Illustrated Discussions

Asia

6. Training Workshop on Participatory Rural Appraisal for Planning Health Projects - *Sheelu Francis, John Devavaram, Arunothayam Erskin*
7. Trends in Health Care - *Alok Kumar*
8. Participatory Rural Appraisal in Identifying Major Illness, Healthcare Providers and Costs - *Sam Joseph*

***RRA Notes* 16 contd...**

9. A Little Experience of PRA Exercise Conducted at Mecluskigang - *Mahadeo Sahu and Ranjan Tirkey*
10. Extract from: Participatory Rural Appraisal for Nepal: Concepts and Methods. A Guide to the Slide Presentation - *Lorna Campbell and Gerard J Gill*
11. Participatory Methods for Research on Women's Reproductive Health - *Elizabeth Tolley and Margaret E. Bentley*

Africa

12. Body Mapping in Health RRA/PRA - *Andrea Cornwall*
13. Notes from a Food and Nutrition PRA in a Guinean Fishing Village - *Judith Appleton*
14. A Note on the Use of Disease Problem Ranking with Relation to Socio-economic Well-being: An Example from Sierra Leone - *Alice Welbourn*

South America

15. Exploring the Potential for Primary Environmental Care: Rapid Appraisal in Squatter Communities in Salvador da Bahia (Brazil) - *P. de Colombani, G. Borrini, M.C. Meira de Melo, M. Irshaid*
16. Actual or Potential Uses of RRA/PRA Methods in Health and Nutrition.

***RRA Notes* 17: March 1993**

1. Correspondence Corner
2. Helicopters at Nhlangwini - *Raymond Auerbach*
3. Resource Flow - Venn Diagrams: a Two-in-One Approach - *Rama Gounder, K. Natarajamoorthy, C. Chinnusamy, P. Nasuredeen, R. Ganesan, N. Shanmugavalli, V.A. Sakunthala, J. Rao*
4. Measuring Agroecosystems Properties: Adaptation of Matrix Scoring Technique - *M. Shanmugam, A. Palchamy, S. Jeeva, A. Kumar, K.C. John, Mr. and Mrs. Marappan*
5. Sorting Fact from Opinion: the Use of a Direct Matrix to Evaluate Finger Millet Varieties - *Michael Drinkwater*
6. Ranking in Planning of Emergency Programme in Angola - *Marie-Noelle Vieu*
7. The Role of Focus Group Interviews in Assessing the Primary Health Care and Family Planning Programme in India - *Abusaleh Shariff and Pravin Visaria*
8. Comparison of RRA and Intensive Residential Study: the Case of Marit, Plateau State, Nigeria - *RRA Workshop Participants (Marit Team) and Newcastle University Expedition*
9. Women's PRA in Hindupur - *Eva Robinson*
10. Examples of PRA in Wetland Development in Guinea Bissau - *Koos Neefjes*
11. Rapid Appraisal of Organisational Cultures: a Challenge for Field Work - *Uwe Kievelitz and Rolf-Dieter Reineke*
12. Methodological Innovations in Burkina Faso with Village Network Mapping - *Irene Guijt*
13. Tips for Trainers: the Margolis Wheel

1. Genealogies as a Method of Social Mapping in PRA - *David Mosse and Mona Mehta*
2. Are Some "Participatory" Techniques Culturally Biased? (Or: Are We Hooked on Mom's Apple Pie?) - *Gerard J Gill*
3. Community Self Survey - *Huub Gaymans and Yanti Maskoen*
4. Learning to Use RRA and PRA to Improve the Activities of Two Landcare Groups in Australia - *Tony Dunn*
5. Finding Out How People Prioritise Their Food Security Problems in Chad: the Challenges of RRA at National Level - *M. Buchanan-Smith, K. Abdelkader, M. Saleh Abdelmajid, A. Allemane, I. Banguita, Behom, S. Djel, B. Idrissa, U. Kleih, B. Mbailenang, F. Rivière, A. Sainibi, D. Tambayo and B. Vandou*
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8. Wealth Ranking for Agricultural Research Purposes in the Eastern Hills of Nepal - *G.O'G Sharrock, K. Waldie and Y. Joshi*
9. FARMI's Experiences on Wealth Ranking in the Philippines: Different Farmers Have Different Needs - *L. Tung and F. Baliña*
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